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SWARAJ

THE PROBLEM OF INDIA

CAPTAIN J. E. ELLAM.

Frontispiece.

SWARAJ

THE PROBLEM OF INDIA

by

CAPTAIN J. E. ELLAM

Author of
"The Religion of Tibet,"
"Navayana," etc.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

LORD BRENTFORD OF NEWICK, P.C.

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34-36 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4
1930

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE ANCHOR PRESS, TIPTREE, ESSEX

FOREWORD

It has been a privilege to read the advance proofs of Captain Ellam's book on India, and to write these few words of commendation. England is lamentably ignorant of the early history of India, perhaps because it has been difficult to get all that is wanted in one volume. This book deals fairly, and I think adequately, with such history. It gives us in mediæval times a brilliant account of the Mogul Dynasty and its Emperors. This is perhaps the most fascinating period in the history of any country: at all events I have always been intensely interested in the splendour and brilliance of the Mogul Court—though one knows that the condition of the mass of the people was not similarly prosperous.

I naturally cannot make myself responsible for the accuracy of all the facts and dates in the book; that I assume. But I especially desire to commend the the last three chapters, which deal with matters of moment which it behoves all Englishmen to study at the present time. It is well that we should realise, as in chapter ten, that the roots of unrest are not in the mass of the people, but in the corrupt and rebellious minds of a few irreconcilable intelligentsia, and that their demands are, as Captain Ellam says, a gigantic bluff, their object being "not India for the Indians, but India for the Brahmins."

It is well also that some of us have the courage to stigmatize the low-class native Press—" the most

ignorant and illiterate in the world" as he does. We are apt, with our great British newspapers, to look upon the Press with a certain amount of respect, but the gutter filth which is daily poured out in India is in itself a warning to Great Britain not to toy with sedition any longer.

Captain Ellam's suggestions for dealing with the present position are drastic, but who can say that we shall not have to come to them. We who are used to democratic government and prosperity under it, assume that no extension of it can ever be withdrawn, and that each nation must go forward with more and more experiments in the widening of democratic ideals. This is by no means certain, and in India it is even more in doubt. If then we find, as I think the evidence of the last few weeks has shown us, that we have gone too far, let us, who had the courage to go to that length, have the equal courage to go back, to amend our mistake—to say that India has proved herself quite unfit for democratic self-government, and that she must, for some generations, in her own interests, be governed and controlled by Great Britain, and by that wonderful Civil Service which has done so much for India, and of which we are all so proud.

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INTRODUCTION

In England and in other countries, the idea is widely prevalent that Swaraj, that is, Home Rule, for India is the outcome of a popular demand.

Nothing could be less in harmony with the facts. Swaraj is an agitation on the part of a small section of Indians, almost entirely Hindu, representative of, or directed by, the higher castes, especially the brahmins. It is supposed to be a progressive movement, whereas it is wholly reactionary.

Statements are constantly made, both by the Swarajist press and by certain papers in England, that British Rule has led to the impoverishment of our great Dependency, and that little or nothing has been, or is being, done to promote the welfare of its peoples. These statements are falsehoods of the first magnitude.

My object is, first, to show that, centuries ago, the Aryan ancestors of the Hindus arrived at a high state of civilisation; and that certain influences, developing within that civilisation, destroyed it, and so lowered the morale of its people that they fell a prey to successive waves of foreign invasion.

Following this is a brief account of how we, the Aryans from the West, sought to develop peaceful commerce with our kinsmen of the East; and how we were impelled against our original intentions, and almost against our will, to establish an Empire.

The result of this, so far from being detrimental, I

prove to have been of inestimable advantage to India; and I explain the difficulties which we had to encounter, and the obstacles still to be overcome, in our efforts to raise the peoples of India out of the state of semi-barbarism into which they had fallen.

Finally, I indicate the real nature of the opposition to British Rule as being composed of precisely those elements which reduced the peoples of India to, and kept them submerged in, conditions of the grossest ignorance, superstition and poverty; and I show that the Swaraj movement is not one of progress towards freedom and enlightenment, but the very reverse.

Why it should be considered politic that the truth about India must not be told to the people of this country I have never been able to understand. But such was the attitude of our statesmen and politicians until recent events rendered this policy of obscurantism impossible. Even as late as last January (1930), it was stated that there was "a tacit understanding among Ministers that there ought to be silence about the position in India." No greater disservice could be done either to India, to Great Britain, or to the Empire. Thus I determined that I would write what I believe to be the truth of the matter for the information of those who wish to be acquainted with the facts.

When I began the investigation that led to the conclusions at which I finally arrived, it was with an open mind. Indeed, I was prepared to sympathise with the supposed aspirations of the Swarajists. But, in the light of what I knew of Indian history, and of the teachings and practices of Hinduism, I was speedily disillusioned when I came into personal contact with some of the leaders, and the rank and file, of the Swaraj movement.

Some time ago a book was published which told the truth about certain aspects of Indian life and custom. It was alleged that the author of that book had been "subsidised," presumably by the British Government. I anticipate any similar charge which may be brought against this book by saying that I have neither been induced, nor subsidised, to write it by anyone. On the contrary, I fully expect that the larger part of my reward will be in the nature of abuse and vilification, not only from the Swarajists, but from those peculiar people, here at Home, who do not wish to hear, and can never believe, any good of their own country. But, if I succeed in proving my case to the majority of readers who matter, I shall be content.

J. E. Ellam.

London.
April, 1930.

SWARAJ: The Problem of India

CHAPTER I

THE ARYANS

We Aryans—What was our Origin?—An Older Civilisation—The Exodus West and South—Language—Invasion of India—The Aboriginal Tribes—Origin of Caste—Early Patriarchal System—The Vedic Religion—Early Culture.

BEFORE it is possible to approach the great problem of India with any hope of attempting its solution, it is necessary to know something of its history, and of the origin and characteristics of its inhabitants.

The history of our own country and people is complex, but it is simplicity itself compared with that of the vast sub-continent known as Hindustan, with its 320 millions of human beings, mixed races and nationalities, speaking some 200 different languages and 500 dialects, in stages of culture varying from the highest civilised types to those of primitive semi-savagery.

The dominant race is composed of the descendants of the Indo-Aryans who were themselves invaders of the peninsula, the area of which is 1,805,000 square miles, from the Himalayas in the thirty-sixth degree of latitude to Cape Cormorin in the eighth, a distance of 1,900 miles from north to south. Thus the climatic conditions are as many and varied as the

characteristics of its peoples, ranging from the temperate to the tropical, with everything intermediate. The geographical features are equally varied, from great ranges of snow-capped mountains to fertile plains, and from these again to malarious jungle, swamp, and arid, inhospitable desert.

It is over the greater part of this immense territory that Great Britain has established her rule, for better or for worse. But, having established it, we British have assumed responsibilities which we are bound to discharge with due regard to the welfare of the peoples, and their rights as fellow-subjects of the British Crown, forming an integral part of the British Empire.

There is none here in England who does not wish well to India and those our fellow-subjects, although this is denied by the small minority of malcontents who are stirring up all the trouble. We have done what we could to raise India out of the state of semi-barbarism into which she had fallen, and our reward from that quarter is abuse and calumny. We would like to see the ancient glory and greatness of India revived, and to help her peoples to achieve the prosperity which they might attain if they would but co-operate. But the forces which are working against them, and against us, will have none of it. They desire to return, as a dog to its vomit, to those conditions which obtained when we first entered the country.

It has been said that the dominant race in India is the Indo-Aryan, a branch of the same great root-race to which we ourselves belong. It is this fact that links us with them and, as I shall endeavour to show, justifies our presence in India. If one branch of our family had the right to invade and

conquer the country from the north several thousand years ago, then we had the right to enter from another direction. The right of conquest may be a debatable one, but the arguments for and against apply equally in the one case as in the other, and the interval of time between the two series of events makes no difference to the principles involved. But our object, in the first instance, was not conquest. Our occupation of the country was forced upon us against our original intentions.

The term Aryan, meaning "noble," is applied to the Indo-European races. Some four or five thousand years ago, and earlier, there was a race that inhabited a region somewhere in Central Asia. Precisely where this was is uncertain. There are no written records of the earliest Aryans. But they certainly lived in towns, were also a pastoral and agricultural people, knew the use of metals, and were civilised. The Vedic religion and literature originated with them. The hymns of the Rig-Veda were in existence before the Aryan exodus began, and were brought down into India by this branch of our race.

A Chinese scholar, a learned Confucian priest, gave me an account which, he said, was held by himself and others of the *literati* to be true. It may, eventually, prove to be the correct solution of the origin of the Aryans. If one looks at the map of Asia, it will be observed that there is an enormous desert region in Central Asia and China, called the Gobi. My Chinese friend said that, many thousands of years ago, this was a vast inland sea, upon the shores of which dwelt a nation in a high state of civilisation. Between it and the Chinese, that is, the Mongolian race, there was constant warfare, which was stayed by the influence of a great Chinese sage known as the "Golden

Teacher." The "Golden Teacher," said my friend, was one of the several Buddhas who have appeared from time to time for the enlightenment of mankind, the predecessor of the Buddha Gotama who was born about 543 B.C. It is from this circumstance that there has been some speculation as to whether Gotama was Chinese, due to confusing the two persons. After that, the peoples of the inland sea, and of the Mongolian, yellow, race were at peace.

Whether this curious legend has any basis in fact, who shall say? But both Indian and Chinese scholars assign a much higher antiquity to civilisation than we in the West are prepared to admit.

Then the waters of the great sea began to dry up, and the white race, the Aryans, had to emigrate. They did so by degrees, one stream going westward across Europe, and the other southward into India. We know that such an exodus did take place, and its cause might very well have been that. We know that there are buried cities in the shifting sands of the Gobi. Their remains have been discovered by recent research. We know also that the water supply of many regions north of the Himalayas is drying up. I myself observed, in the course of a journey into Tibet, a few years ago, a series of plains which were, not so long ago, a chain of great connected lakes, now dwindling away; and numerous villages which were deserted because the land is no longer fertile on account of this drying up of the water supply.

The Hindus themselves are not good at history. But modern European research in the Indus valley has revealed traces of civilisations dating far beyond the beginning of the Christian Era.

For the Hindu, the history of his race goes back more than 3,000 years B.C., but it is so interwoven with

myth and legend that it cannot be taken literally. The Sanskrit epic, the Mahabharata, refers to a great war waged in Northern India at some far distant period. It may be historical in the sense that Homer's Iliad contains the memory of an actual siege of Troy. It may even be an echo of the events on the shores of the sea that is now desert, mentioned by my Chinese friend. The Mahabharata is a much longer work than the Iliad. It contains 220,000 lines against the Iliad's 16,000. In the same way, the Ramayana, the other great Sanskrit epic, doubtless contains a genuine tradition of a war between an Indian king and Ceylon. But there has grown up about the prosaic historical narratives so luxuriant a growth of poetic legend, myth, magic and mystery, that it is almost impossible to disentangle the facts from the fables.

In any case, it is certain that there was an immigration into India of Aryan tribes from Central Asia somewhere about 3,000 years B.C. It was not an exodus *en masse* of large numbers, but a gradual process in successive waves. They came first into the Indus valley, where they left traces in the form of ruined cities, temples and rock excavations, forts, and so forth, which prove that they were not rude barbarians, but a civilised people.

What was their language? Hindus will tell us that it was pure Sanskrit, that is to say, the old, or Vedic Sanskrit. There are differences of opinion on the subject. At any rate, it was the Sanskrit which is at the root of many languages including our own. These languages are known as the Indo-European.

As regards the Aryans of Europe, the languages closely allied are put together in classes known as stocks, which are sub-divided into branches and groups. There is the Teutonic stock, to which our

own language belongs, others being German, Flemish, Dutch, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. Latin, French and Spanish belong to the Romaic stock. Modern Greek is of the Hellenic stock. Cymric and Gaelic are the two branches of the Keltic stock. The Cymric group consists of Welsh, Armorican, which is a dialect of Brittany, and the old Cornish. The native Irish or Erse, the Scottish Gaelic, and the Manx of the Isle of Man, belong to the Gaelic group. The Slavonic stock is represented by Russian, and the Lettish stock by the dialects of Eastern Prussia. All of these languages derive from the Sanskrit.

In India such languages as Hindustani, Bengali, and, in Ceylon, Sinhalese, represent one stock, the second Asiatic stock being the Irañian or Persian. Thus the Aryan languages fall under eight stocks, six European and two Asiatic, and prove beyond doubt our identity of origin with our Indian relatives. Not all European languages are of Aryan derivation. Turkish, Hungarian, and the languages of the Lapps, Finns and Basques, form the principal exceptions.

The term Hindu is from the Persian Hind, which, in turn, is derived from the Sanskrit name of the River Indus (Sindhus). Later the name Hindustan came to be applied to the whole Peninsula. Originally, therefore, a Hindu was one who came from the River Indus. He was an Aryan. But a man to-day is called a Hindu, not necessarily because he is an inhabitant of India, or belongs to any particular race or nationality, but because he is an adherent of the Brahmanical religion. The old significance of the word has ceased to apply.

We can imagine the fair-skinned Aryans on the march, the chiefs of tribes and heads of families leading the young warriors, the women and children and the

older people following with the flocks and herds. They are pushing southward through the desolate valleys, over the perilous passes, and down the southern slopes of the mountains. Then, before them they see, at their feet, the immensity of the plains, stretching to the far horizon, a land of promise indeed.

The successive waves of Aryan immigrants soon settled in Northern India and there established villages, and later on towns and cities. They did not effect this without conflict. They would soon become aware that the promised land was inhabited. As they pressed southward, they would come into contact, more and more, with tribes vastly inferior to themselves, and who opposed them fiercely; primitive tribes, uncivilised and warlike.

Many of these tribes still exist, living now much as they did then. There are the Assam hillmen, who were troublesome raiders until the British took them in hand. One of their tribes, the Akas, is divided into two clans whose names mean "The Eaters of a Thousand Hearths," and "The Raiders Who Lurk in the Fields." There are the Juangs or Patuas, literally "The Leaf Wearers," of Orissa, so called because they wore no clothes, only bunches of leaves. There is an amusing story told of how they were brought rather more into line with civilised habit by a British officer in 1871. He called them together, made a speech, and distributed strips of cotton among the women. They put them on, saw how much better they looked, and then marched past him in procession. Finally they collected the leaves, which had formed their sole clothing, and set fire to them. In Orissa also are the Khonds, which means "The Mountaineers," living on the forest ranges above the coast. They despise all work save husbandry and warfare, which

last pursuit is discouraged by the British Raj. Their god is the spirit of the earth. Twice every year, at seed time and harvest, and when special calamities occurred, the earth god had to be appeased by a human sacrifice. This practice was suppressed by the British in 1835. There are the wild Puliars of the Anamalai Hills in Southern Madras, who live in caves or leaf sheds and worship demons and nature spirits; and the Nairs of the South-West, who practise polyandry. There are the Santals of Lower Bengal, also animists, the Gonds of the Central Provinces, and the Maris who flee on the approach of strangers, and many others.

These aboriginal folk are described by one of the Vedic poets as "flat nosed," or "without noses," "lawless," "without gods," "without rites." The Aryans called them Dasyus, or enemies, and Dasas, or slaves, to which condition they proceeded to reduce them where they could.

The origin of these primitive tribes is unknown. Their languages indicate three stocks. The Tibeto-Burman tribes entered India from the north-east. The Kolarians appear to have come from the same direction. The third division is the Dravidian. This term has been, somewhat incorrectly, applied to the non-Aryans generally. It comes from the Sanskrit Dravida, which indicates their main territory in Southern India.

The Dravidians form a large group, extending from the south of the peninsula, northward to the Arabian Sea about one hundred miles below Goa, and along the Western Ghats, north-east through Hyderabad, and east to the Bay of Bengal. They are also found in Northern Ceylon. Their principal languages are Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese, Malayalam, Tulu, Gondi,

Kurux, Kota, Kui, and Rajmahal. These are quite distinct from any language of Aryan derivation.

All these peoples have to be taken into consideration when we think of self-government for India; but how many of us, British Aryans, realise it when we speak of the *people* of India and the Indian *nation*? There is no Indian people or nation, but as many nations, peoples and languages as there are in Europe. It would be interesting to know how they are to be organised into constituencies, how elections would be carried on among them, and what they would do with their votes, since most of them have never even heard of these things! We may take it for granted that the vast majority of them know nothing, and care less, about representative government, the so-called All-India Congress, and the doings of the small minority in the large towns who describe themselves as Nationalists. One thing is certain. It is that the British Raj stands between them and the gross brutality to which they would once more be subjected were we to hand over the government to the Hindu Swarajists.

These non-Aryans are all dark skinned, some of them black, whereas the Aryans prided themselves on their fairness. This is still so marked in Northern India that one may see complexions almost European, with light hair and eyes, the mark, originally, of the highest Aryan stock.

It is here that we have the origin of that institution which has become India's greatest curse, namely, caste. The caste rule was undoubtedly laid down, in the first instance, in order to prevent admixture of the despised aboriginal blood with that of the Aryans. Its origin and purpose is seen in the word for caste, which is *varna*—colour.

All who were Aryan, that is, light of colour and

complexion, were in-caste, and all others who were not Aryan, and dark-skinned, were out-caste. It is mainly of these dark-skinned peoples that the out-castes and untouchables consist to-day, subject to all kinds of disabilities, privations and insults from the supposedly, but not always, light-skinned caste Hindus. I say "supposedly light-skinned Hindus," for the reason that colour no longer indicates caste. The line of demarcation, as originally drawn, has been ignored to such an extent in succeeding centuries that the infusion of non-Aryan blood among the caste Hindus no longer entitles multitudes of them to be called Aryan at all. Particularly is this the case in Southern India. Even the proud brahmin caste is deeply tainted and coloured. In fact, caste has come to mean something else altogether than colour.

The treatment of the out-castes, estimated to number some fifty millions, is one of the problems that is urgent at the present day. It is one of the causes of unrest, since the British Government is not disposed to treat these people as do the caste Hindus. The caste Hindus have always treated them like vermin, whereas our Western Aryan disposition is to encourage them to consider themselves as human beings, and to treat them as such. Should Swaraj, that is, Home Rule, be established in India, one of the first things that would happen would be a return of the gross oppression, tyranny and outrage to which the out-castes have been subjected by the in-castes for many centuries.

In passing, I may say that one of the best tests that can be applied to the Swarajist who talks so much about democracy and self-government is, first of all to ask him to which caste he belongs. Then ask, if you meet him here in England, whether he has

not broken caste by crossing the "Black Water," and so become defiled. Ask next whether he is in favour of a form of government in India fairly representative of all classes of the various communities. He would probably say that he is. Finally put this question: Would you, as an elected representative of your own constituency, be willing to sit side by side, and associate on equal terms, with the representatives of the out-castes and the untouchables? This, in nine cases out of ten, will floor him completely. Of course, as an in-caste, he will not, and cannot, associate with the out-caste on any terms whatever. Before a Hindu can come to Europe, he must get permission from the priests. On his return, he has to go through a ceremony of purification before being readmitted to caste. He is considered to have been defiled by contact with the white Aryans who are his superiors in respect of *varna*.

It is just this question of caste that forms the great and insuperable obstacle to the establishment of a form of government in British India in any way comparable with what we are accustomed to in this country. Caste is the main reason why it is utterly impossible, however much we may be in favour of the abstract idea. Further, we have to remember that the psychology, the mentality, of the Indian is wholly different from our own. The two things do not, and cannot, run together. They stand in altogether different categories.

The early economic and social conditions of the Aryans in India were patriarchal and communistic. Even up to the time of the Buddha (500 B.C.), there were groups of republics on the lower, southern slopes of the Himalayas. The head of the family,

or of associated families, the clan, or the head of the tribe, was vested with the chief authority. He was also the sacrificing priest. Indeed, the brahmin (as such), does not appear in the earliest accounts of those times as being of any special importance.

When nations were formed, the king seems to have been elected. Certainly the heads of the early republics were. The king's title was "Vis-pati" —"Lord of the Settlers." It is found in the old Persian "Vis-paiti," and in Central Europe to this day among the Lithuanians as "Wiez-patis."

The position of women was an honourable one. They were practically on an equality with men. They were not herded into zenanas, hidden behind purdahs, and kept out of the public sight. They were often highly educated and cultured, and some of the most beautiful poems in the ancient literature were written by ladies.

It is by the position of women that we may estimate the standard of a civilisation. In this respect the early Aryans were on a much higher level than are their descendants to-day, or have been for many centuries. Marriage was regarded as sacred, husband and wife were named equally as *dampati*—rulers of the household. Women prepared the *soma* libation, and joined in the sacrifices. Child marriage, the main cause of the degeneration of the Hindus, had not been introduced. There is a hymn of the Rig Veda which indicates how women were regarded in those times. Following are the concluding verses. The bridegroom is speaking:

"May the Lord of creatures bring children unto us: may Aryaman keep us united till old age. Enter auspiciously thy husband's home, O bride! and bring blessing to our men and our cattle.

"Not angry of eye, and not a destroyer of thy husband, be gentle-hearted and full of lustre, bring weal unto our cattle. Bearing sons, heroic and devoted unto the gods, bring blessing to our men and to our cattle.

"O bounteous Indra, make this woman blest in sons and in riches. Grant unto her ten sons, and make her husband the eleventh man.

"Bear sway, O bride! over thy father-in-law and thy mother-in-law; be as a queen over thy husband's sisters and thy husband's brothers.

"May the All-gods and the Waters unite our hearts. May Matarisvan and Dhatri and Deshtri unite us."

The horrible practice of suttee, or the burning alive of widows on their husbands' funeral pyres, was unknown. It was introduced by the brahmin priests in the later, degenerate days. There is nothing whatever in the Veda to sanction it. The verse by which the brahmins pretend to find their authority has a very different meaning. It runs thus:

Rise, come to the world of the living, O woman! He is lifeless by whose side thou liest. Become the wife of him who holds thee by the hand, and who wishes to become thy husband.

The brahmins interpreted the first sentence wrongly as, "Rise, come to us," which they pretended meant "come to the gods," and the only proper way, they said, was through the fire. But the concluding sentence (which they suppressed) shows that the widow was expected to marry again, certainly not to be treated in the shameful way she is to-day when she becomes the despised drudge of the household.

The extent to which suttee was carried on throughout India is almost incredible. Sometimes two or three thousand women were thus immolated with the body of one raja, and in the case of quite ordinary

individuals as many as sixty. One of the reasons assigned was that it tended to protect the man from being poisoned, and thus at some Indian courts a clean sweep was made of the whole zenana. The British Government prohibited suttee in 1829, in face of the bitterest opposition. It is stated that there had been 464 cases in the preceding year in Bengal alone. But it still continued in large areas outside the British jurisdiction.

Even to-day, despite its legal prohibition, it is doubtful whether suttee is not practised secretly. It is certain that it occurred as late as 1913. Not only were widows burned, but in many cases they were, probably are still, buried alive with their dead husbands. The question may be asked: Would suttee revive if the British left India? Undoubtedly it would, for Hindu writers continue to glorify it, and the brahmins advocate and defend it. It is sometimes made a reproach against the British that we have not advanced the peoples of India further along the road of fitness for self-government. This question alone indicates how difficult that road is. In this respect, as in many others, the mentality of the Hindus, and especially of the priests, is on a level with that of the Aztecs. It has not changed, nor will it change for generations yet to come.

We have seen that, originally, caste meant colour, but it gradually came to mean something else. By degrees the Aryan society became sub-divided into classes to which the same designation, caste, was applied. They were the outcome of development, following from the evolution of a settled state of things giving rise to differentiation and demarcation of social functions.

When warfare was continually being waged for

the defence of occupied territory, or for the acquisition of more, the warriors were the most important members of the community. They formed a specialised class. The king, or chieftain, could not spend all his time with sacerdotal functions which tended to become more and more complicated. His attention was often fully occupied with leadership in war. The priestly office thus became relegated to another class which concerned itself exclusively with religious matters, and specialised in the sacrificial and other rites.

A settled state of society means, moreover, differentiation of productive industries of all kinds, and of trade and commerce. From the Vedic literature we learn that there were warriors and priests, traders and artisans, husbandmen, herdsmen, and so forth. Thus the four original castes came into existence. These were the kshatriyas (warriors), the brahmins (priests), the vaisyas (traders), and the sudras (servants, labourers and slaves). The vaisya caste originally consisted of the agricultural settlers. Later there were classed under this head traders and various kinds of craftsmen.

The first three were of pure Aryan descent, and called themselves the "Twice-born," a term since made to apply to the brahmins only. Concerning the sudras there is some doubt. They were always the servants, and there is reason for supposing that some of the conquered non-Aryans, reduced to slavery, were included in this caste, and that the offspring of breaches of the colour rule were relegated to it. They are styled in the Veda "slaves of black descent." They are called the "Once-born," and by many contemptuous epithets. They were not, and are not, admitted to the temples, or to the public sacrifices and festivities.

It will, perhaps, have been noticed that, in my enumeration of the castes, I put the warriors first, and so they were undoubtedly esteemed. Thus, in the Mahabharata (Vanaparva) Sanatkumara says:

"The kshatriya is the best of those among this folk who put their trust in lineage."

The legal Code of Manu is appealed to as the principal authority for caste in its present forms. The brahmins attribute the Code to a mythical demiurge Vaivasvata, or the "Sun-born," supposed to be the progenitor of the Aryan race. But the Code, as it exists to-day, is certainly not earlier than about 600 B.C., when it was compiled, probably from older material, by the priests themselves. It originated with the priests; it has, whilst in their close custody, been recast and re-edited when, and as, it suited their purposes, as is the case also with the Vedas, and all their other books.

Even so, the Code of Manu gives little support to the existing caste system. There is no artisan caste mentioned. Eating with another caste, or eating food prepared by another caste, does not involve defilement. These are, to-day, among the most frequent causes of caste contamination. That the castes might intermarry is shown by the following rules: a kshatriya woman marrying a brahmin must hold an arrow in her hand; a vaisya woman marrying a kshatriya or a brahmin must hold a whip; a sudra woman marrying one of the upper castes must hold the skirt of a mantle.

The brahmin was not necessarily the son of a brahmin on both sides. Thus the *Smriti* states that the mothers of many *munis* were not of the brahmin

caste. The mother of Kausika Muni was a sudra; of Parasara, a chandalini; of Vasishta, a strumpet. The Kanvayana brahmins are descended from Ajamidha, a kshatriya. The two sons of Nabhagarishta, a vaisya, became brahmins. It is therefore clear that the castes were not rigidly defined for many centuries.

Nor was it only the brahmin who might be a priest. In the Mahabharata, Yudhsthira says:

"In human society it is difficult to ascertain one's caste, because of the promiscuous intercourse among the four orders. . . . Men belonging to all the orders begot offspring upon women of all the orders. . . . And to this the Rishis have borne testimony, by using at the beginning of a sacrifice such expressions as: 'Of what caste soever we be, we celebrate the sacrifice.'"

The sacred Vedas, upon which the whole structure of the Brahmanical religion rests, give no support to the later forms of caste. The only passage bearing on the subject is in the *Purushasuktam*, the 90th hymn of the 10th book of the Rig Veda Samhita, as follows:

When they divided man, how did they make him? What was his mouth?—what his arms?—what are called his thighs and feet? The brahmin was his mouth, the kshatriya was made his arms, the vaisya became his thighs, the sudra was born from his feet.

This is, obviously, an interpolation by the brahmins when they had established their predominance. The early Aryans knew nothing of Brahma; he had not then been invented.

In the Vedic accounts of the creation, the origin of many things besides classes of men is attributed in the same fanciful manner to parts of the divine person, namely, Brahma. It is upon this kind of myth that

the later caste system is based. It could never have been established but for the deliberate policy of the priests who kept the people ignorant and illiterate, and who forbade the lower castes to study the scriptures even if they learned to read. In opposition to the fairy tale of the four-fold birth from Brahma is the story that the castes sprang from Manu himself, and he is removed by several generations of imaginary gods and goddesses from Brahma. The *Santiparvam* says that the castes are solely the result of the works of men, as we have seen they were, and the reasons for them.

The main point is that the brahmins, or priests, did not, at first, occupy the position of predominance which they have since arrogated to themselves. Their later pretensions rest upon a species of imposture, and have no justification in ancient practice.

I have dwelt at some length on the question of caste, and shall return to it again because it is of great importance. It provides the key to the whole problem in India. It is only by grasping its significance that one can realise the state of affairs as they were, as they are now, and the root causes of the crisis which we have to face at the present time.

In order to understand the mentality of any people it is necessary to have some understanding of their philosophy of life. This is usually identified with their religion. It is particularly the case with the Hindu. He has a god for everything, including his vices.

The ancient collection of hymns, the Rig Veda, formed the basis of the early Aryan religion. No one knows its origin. It doubtless dates far back in the mists of time when the Aryans first began their exodus. The Hindu says it existed " before all time."

From certain astronomical allusions, European scholars infer that its composition was somewhere about 1500 B.C. But since the hymns have gone through the hands of generations of priestly copyists, they may have been subject to alterations, additions and interpolations. They are, in substance, undoubtedly older than that. They form a collection of 1,017 short poems of 10,580 verses, chiefly addressed to the gods. They show the Aryans on the Indus, and from them we obtain such general impressions as have been indicated concerning these people.

The gods of the early Aryans were bright gods. The horrible, bloodthirsty and cruel demons, such as Kali, the black goddess of death and destruction, which disgrace the Hindu pantheon, had not yet been introduced. The older gods would seem, from their names, to be personifications of the forces or phenomena of nature. Brahmins have so explained them to me, repudiating the illiterate and ignorant view of the multitude (that is, the lower castes) that these, and other, gods are actual personages.

There is, behind the phenomenal universe, an Absolute Spirit, or Intelligence, of which all that exists is the manifestation. It is "That Which has no Name because It has no Form," and is alluded to by the mystic syllable "Aum." The "gods" are merely attributes of the power and majesty of the One.

The Vedic divinities are called "devas"—shining ones. There is the god of the heaven worlds, Dyaush-pitar in Sanskrit, Dies-piter or Jupiter of the Romans, Zeus of the Greeks; the god of the sky, in Sanskrit Varuna, in Latin Uranus, in Greek Ouranos; and the god of the waters, Indra. To those who know India, it will be understood how Indra

became the most important of the gods, since it is upon the seasonal rains that subsistence depends. By Indra's favour the harvest is plentiful, otherwise there is famine. Then come Agni (Latin, Ignis) the god of fire; Ushas (Greek, Eos) the dawn; and the Aswins, the riders of the dawn, the Lords of Lustre, mounted upon the first rays of sunrise. The Sun (Surjya), the Wind (Vayu), the Day (Mitra), the intoxicating juice of the plant Soma, and many others figure in the Veda. In all there were thirty-three gods, eleven in heaven, eleven in the atmosphere, and eleven on earth.

Bearing in mind that these gods are but manifestations of the One Supreme Deity, it can be understood how each of them was adored as the Supreme God. Thus: "Neither gods nor men reach unto thee, O Indra." Varuna is addressed: "Thou art lord of all, of heaven and earth; thou art king of gods and of men." Soma is also described as "king of heaven and earth."

I quote one of the hymns of the Veda to indicate that, behind the seeming diversity of the gods, there is but one only:

In the beginning there arose the Golden Child. He was the one born lord of all that is. He established the earth and the sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

He who gives life, he who gives strength; whose command all the Bright Gods revere; whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is also death. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

He who, through his power, is the one king of the breathing and awakening world. He who governs all, man and beast. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

He through whom the sky is bright and the earth firm;

he through whom the heaven is established, nay, the highest heaven; he who measureth out the light and the air. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?

He who by his might looked even over the water-clouds; he who alone is God above all gods. He is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice.

Later, as Brahmanism developed, the early Vedic religion degenerated. The old groups of the Shining Ones gave place to the conception of the One God in three aspects, namely, Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva the Destroyer. This is the Brahmanical Trinity.

Brahma the Creator is too aloof to be a popular deity. Vishnu is more companionable, more human, so to speak. He is said to have incarnated himself ten times on earth, and mixed freely among men. In his character as Krishna, the eighth incarnation, he was none too reputable, stealing the clothes of girls who were bathing, and playing other pranks. In the Mahabharata he is represented as violating all the rules of honour and decency, and as reddening his eyes by drinking. Yet some people describe him as the Hindu Christ!

Siva is a more sinister personage. Being capable of, and disposed to do, violence and injury, he is to be feared, and must therefore be propitiated. His consort, or female counterpart, Kali, the black one, the goddess of death and destruction, delights in bloody sacrifices, human not so long ago. The murderous Thugs, suppressed by the British, were her especial devotees and favourites. Siva and Kali occupy a most important, I might say the leading place, in popular Hinduism. It is significant that the Swarajists regard Kali as their patroness. Their war cry, "Bande Mataram!" often translated "Hail

to the Motherland," means nothing of the kind. The word "mataram" is never used in the sense of mother-*country*. The slogan is really: "Hail to the Mother!" that is Kali, whose temple at Kalighat, near Calcutta, is the rallying-point of the Bengali Swarajists. There they sacrifice goats to her, and one often hears it hinted that the time is coming when white goats will be slain in her honour. *By "white goats" is meant Europeans.* The cult of Kali indicates an aspect of the Hindu mentality that is not understood in this country.

A strong, determined, merciless ruler, who will certainly visit his displeasure on those who offend or disobey him, is regarded with abject deference and respect. But an easy-going ruler, who is disposed to give way to popular clamour, who is mild and apt to forgive rebels and misdoers, is despised as a weakling. He soon lost his authority in the old days, and was certain to be deposed or assassinated before he had reigned very long. The British Raj has never been the first, but it was certainly strong until its strength was sapped by sentimentalists here at home, who have not the least understanding of the wide differences between the social and other conditions of India and those of this country. Of late years it has become absolutely weak; and the consequences are as we see them to-day.

In addition to the triune aspect of the God head, all the other Vedic gods which have been enumerated are still worshipped. But to their company have been added many others unknown to the early Aryans. Some of them were taken into the Brahmanical pantheon from the aboriginal demon worship. Others were invented to meet various demands. The Brahmanical religion is a most accommodating affair, as

we shall see. The names of the gods of the Hindus are now legion, so that he needs to be a very learned pundit indeed who can recite them all!

To sum up. We find the Indo-Aryans originating in a region of Central Asia many thousands of years ago. They were civilised. Their religion was based on the idea of One God, and it expressed itself in elevated forms of worship. They had a culture that might be considered advanced even to-day. They had a literature, but all that has come down are the Vedic hymns; the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata came later, but may be based on older material. They had some scientific knowledge of astronomy, medicine, architecture, and the arts of music, painting, sculpture, a legal code, and a fanciful, semi-mythical history. Some thousands of years before the Christian Era they were forced to emigrate. The Vedic hymns describe them on the march to the southward in communities, each head of a household a warrior, priest and husbandman, with his wife and family, flocks and herds. They came, first, to the River Indus. Then, by degrees, they penetrated to the southern slopes of the Himalayas. They established patriarchal and then tribal communities, which developed into kingdoms. They built cities. They waged war with the aboriginal tribes. Being fair of complexion, they established a colour-bar called *varna*. Sub-division of social function gave rise to the four classes known as castes. At first the lines of demarcation between these were not rigid, except as against the dark-skinned aborigines. The Aryans were a bold, adventurous, virile and warlike race. Subsequently they pressed southward, and in the end dominated the whole peninsula.

A people of this character, entering a country like

India in its virgin state, with none to oppose them but primitive semi-savages, had before them a future of unimaginable possibilities. What might they not have achieved?

What they did become, what they did achieve; how they rose to a point that might have carried them to a higher civilisation than the world has ever seen, even to this day; how they missed the opportunity; the nature of the influences that dragged them down from civilisation to the state of semi-barbarism in which we found them—these are the matters which I shall discuss in the following pages.

CHAPTER II

THE BUDDHIST PERIOD

No Hindu History—First Reliable Date—The Buddha—Brahmin Philosophy—Hindu and European Mentality—Arts, Crafts, Science and Law—Doctrine of the Buddha—His Attitude towards Caste—Aim of the Brahmins—The Greek Invasion—Chandragupta—Megasthenes' Account of India.

INDIANS are not good at history, as I have already remarked. What we know of the earlier periods has been pieced together by the researches of European scholars from fragmentary records discovered by the Archæological Survey of India and by individual antiquarians.

Practically all of this work is the result of British initiative. But for us, it is safe to say, there would be no coherent history of India at all. The Hindu account is of priestly origin, and, from what we know of history as written by priests in other directions, we are prepared to find little else than a tissue of legends, fairy tales and supernatural happenings. We are not disappointed!

It is not until about 500 B.C. that the historian can find a date for an event that can be fixed with any approach to certainty. For 2,500 years after the Aryans entered India, there is no history beyond the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, if these can be considered as history. They certainly embody memories

of actual happenings. As literature, they are of the first rank, but the imagination of the poets has run riot to such an extent as to make them appear pure fiction.

That there were kingdoms formed in the centuries before 600 B.C. there can be no doubt; nor that these kingdoms waged war with each other as well as against the aborigines.

But in the sixth century B.C. occurred an event that led to the development of another literature besides the Sanskrit, and apart altogether from the brahmin priests. This was the birth of the most remarkable personage who has ever appeared in the history of the world, namely, Siddattha Gotama, afterwards known as the Buddha.

The literature that was compiled after the death of the Buddha was written in the Pali, a language closely akin to the Sanskrit. From this we are able to infer, with a tolerable degree of accuracy, what the conditions were at that date, and also to piece various events together in some sort of sequence.

In the Ganges valley there were various kingdoms. In the north, on the southern slopes and at the foot of the Himalayas, were small, aristocratic republics and kingdoms. Of the kingdoms along the Ganges, the most important was Magadha (now Behar), whose king was Bimbisara, and, a few centuries later, the great Asoka, under whose influence India rose to the highest point of civilisation she ever attained. The teaching of the Buddha provided the impetus.

It was during the reign of Bimbisara that Gotama, later called the Buddha—a title meaning "Enlightened"—was born about the middle of the sixth century B.C. His father was Suddhodana, chief of one of the Aryan clans of Northern India, known as

the Sakyas, then settled on the borders of the modern Nepal. With that love of literary embellishment and poetic exaggeration to which Indian writers are prone, this raja, or chieftain, is represented as a great monarch, ruling over a magnificent and powerful kingdom. Allowing for all that, he was undoubtedly of the noble, warrior class (kshatriya) and an Aryan. He was probably wealthy, and his son, Gotama, was brought up with a view to succeeding his father and becoming, in turn, a warrior prince.

But Gotama was a youth of no ordinary character. We read that he was handsome, athletic and proficient in all manly exercises. But he was more than this. He was possessed, not only of powerful intellect, but of genius. He became the greatest teacher that India has ever known. He founded a religion that profoundly affected the whole of Asia. Buddhism became the dominant religion of India, and its influence spread even to Europe.

To-day, Buddhism, although corrupted in some of its later phases, still numbers, after 2,500 years, more adherents than any other religion. Many of the teachings of Buddhism are startlingly in accord with the findings of modern science, although differently expressed; and there are signs of its revival in a form adapted to present-day conditions and the altered modes of thought that go with them.*

At that time there seems to have been a high standard of education and considerable intellectual activity among all classes. We read that it was the custom of the leaders of various schools of thought, philosophers, religious exponents, and others, to go about with their disciples, expounding their views

* See *Navayana: Buddhism and Modern Thought*, by J. E. Ellam (Rider) and *The Message of Buddhism*, by Subhadra Bhikkhu (Kegan Paul).

and debating one with another. Not only kings and rajas, but the people also, took pleasure in listening to their discourses and arguments.

Most of these doctors, or pundits, were brahmins, for the brahmins had, by this time, established their reputation for learning, even though their claims to caste supremacy were still challenged by the proud kshatriyas; and they were in course of strengthening their authority in religious matters and in learning generally. Their views varied widely, but, so far as we are able to judge, they conducted their debates with admirable courtesy and mutual toleration.

The principal schools of brahmin philosophy were six in number, and there were many others of less importance. These six main schools are called Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaishesika, Mimansa, and Vedanta. All have to do with speculations about "God" and "Soul," and their theories are reflected, more or less, in the later philosophies of the West. There seems little doubt that the Greek philosophers owed a good deal to Indian thought, since there was close intercourse between the Greeks and the Hindus.

Of these schools the Samkhya is the oldest, and means that which can be numbered, classified, or grouped; its main thesis is the discrimination between spirit and matter. The Yoga arose out of the Samkhya, and means self-concentration with a view to seeing the "soul" as it looks when abstracted from matter. The Nyaya teaches that the highest aim of human life is the understanding of the First Cause, that is to say, "God." The Vaishesika is based upon the Nyaya, and teaches that liberation is the reward of divine knowledge. The Mimansa means profound reflection, and has to do with the correct interpretation of the Vedic ritual and texts upon which the brahmanical

religion is based. The Vedanta deals with inquiry into the nature of Absolute Spirit.

These philosophies indicate intellectual powers of no mean order, but those powers were, from our point of view, largely misdirected. They attempt to treat of matters concerning which no one can possibly have any knowledge, and therefore they lead nowhere save to what the Buddha described as a tangle, a maze, a labyrinth of useless speculation. They are ingenious, subtle, but with little, if any, practical application. They are wholly speculative, usually beg the questions at issue, and carry one into a dream-world of useless mysticism. To a large extent they consist of unwarranted assumptions and baseless classifications, and arrive at conclusions out of harmony both with reason and experience. Often they become involved in a mass of meaningless verbiage.

There are some people in this country who credit the Hindus with higher "spiritual" attainments than we, in the modern, "materialistic" West, have any idea of. This view is wholly absurd. It is easy to interpret what is unintelligible and has no real meaning as "spiritual," or "occult," or "esoteric." We have an example of this in such a modern and nonsensical cult as Christian Science.

The value to us of a knowledge of Hindu philosophy is that it enables us to understand why the Hindus are, in the main, so unpractical and impossible when confronted with our Western civilisation, its methods and its trend of thought. We are concerned with things that can be practically and experimentally dealt with as matters of positive, demonstrable knowledge. We are more concerned to apply these, as far as we can, to the making of *this* world more habitable, a place better worth living in.

The Hindu, on the other hand, lives in the realm of the so-called "spiritual," and endeavours to detach himself as much as possible from the material sphere on which he lives. The result is a tendency to neglect, or to despise, mere mundane existence, with the result that its conditions become abominable and intolerable. India had got into this state before we went there. We have tried to improve things for the material benefit, not of one class, or caste, but of all; and the conflict between the two opposite viewpoints is one of the causes of the trouble. Thus Mr. Gandhi denounces our civilisation as "satanic," and he seems likely to lead his followers into a disaster which would be satanic indeed. He will then enter upon another of his celebrated fasts, but it will be too late to remedy the mischief.

The brahmins, to give them their due, developed a body of useful, as well as useless, learning. They preferred to hand it down by word of mouth, a system which is carried on to this day. Thus it is said that, if all the books were suddenly destroyed, they could reproduce them word for word. The memorising is facilitated by their being in verse (slokas). Learned brahmins have told me that they consider this method to be preferable to writing as less liable to error. Thus it is doubtful whether any of their written texts, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Code of Manu, and the rest, have any great antiquity.

The brahmins had considerable astronomical knowledge, probably handed down from the ancient Aryan civilisation. They taught the Greeks much in this respect. They had an admirable system of medicine which declined with the degeneration that followed the Buddhist period. Architecture, sculpture and the art of painting, craftsmanship of a high order,

and chemistry as applied to the working of metals, enamel work, dyeing, and so forth—in all of these they were proficient. In short, they possessed scientific knowledge, but how far it was developed in our sense of the term we have no means of knowing. But there are indications in the Buddha's teachings that it may have been much further advanced than we realise. Their art of music is curious, differing from our own, so that it does not please the Western ear until attuned. Their law was part of their religion, and was, consequently, under the control of the priests. The Code of Manu has been mentioned. Another, the Code of Yajnavalkya, was compiled about A.D. 200. The codes, being in the custody of the priests, and interpreted by them, were, of course, made to support their caste claims and to serve their interests in other ways. As the codes came to be applied later, and in their present form, they are found to be out of harmony with progress and with modern requirements. They keep the castes apart, forbidding them to intermarry, to eat, or even to associate together. They form another of the obstacles to the advance of the Indian peoples along the lines of our developing world civilisation; and they are quite opposed to the idea of democratic government.

It was under such conditions as have been described, indicative of higher standards of civilisation than we find in later centuries, that the Buddha was brought up. He mastered all the learning of the philosophers and religious teachers, all the arts and sciences of his time. We read that, as he came to reflect upon the problems of life, he was overpowered by a realisation of the essential suffering involved. That is to say, life is fraught with unsatisfactoriness, discontent, annoyance, disappointment, anxiety, physical and mental pain, in

greater or less degree, and—no one can avoid it, no matter how "fortunate" his circumstances may be. This is due to the fact that all is transient, nothing is stable or enduring. Birth involves pain, and thereafter comes a period, long or short, of uncertainty, instability and vicissitude, accompanied by disease, decline, decay, and ending in death for all living beings, both man and beast.

The Buddha did not find the teachings of the philosophers of the six greater schools, or of the lesser (the Buddhist books mention sixty-six), either satisfactory or correct. He therefore struck out on an independent line, finally arrived at what he considered was the true cause and solution of this problem of suffering in life, and thereby attained enlightenment.

Among the Hindus, then as now, there were "holy men" who practised grim austerities with a view to attaining spiritual perfection. The Buddha followed some of these for a time, and came to the conclusion that mortification of the flesh was painful, vain and profitless, much more likely to lead to results the very reverse of what was aimed at. "That way madness lies." He therefore left those ascetics and announced the doctrine of the "Middle Path" that avoids extremes either of self-indulgence or of asceticism.

The Buddha's teaching differs in many important essentials from that of the brahmins. He deprecated metaphysical speculation. He declared himself free from all such theorising. He ignored the Hindu gods, although he did not definitely deny them. But he did repudiate the idea of a First Cause, that is to say, a Creator-god. He taught that the phenomenal universe never had a beginning, and that there never

was a " first cause." Whereas Brahmanism is theistic and dualistic, Buddhism is non-theistic and monistic.

Brahmanism teaches the existence of a god-creator, and divides the universe into two distinct categories : the spiritual, which is real and permanent, and the material, which is unreal and transitory. Buddhism, on the other hand, has no theory of a god-creator, or of the spiritual, but regards the psychical and physical as two sides of one and the same thing. Thus it is monistic. There is no noumenon behind the phenomenon. The theory of the Absolute is a mere assumption, a " peg " upon which to hang all the tissue of metaphysical moonshine beloved of the mystic, and also, be it said, of the charlatan who pretends to knowledge which he does not possess.

Whether for these reasons Buddhism may be considered as materialistic is a debatable point that cannot be settled until we can define matter. If we cannot do this, still less can we define " spirit." The effort to do so leads merely to useless word-spinning such as the Hindus revel in. For the Buddhist, it is mere waste of time.

We are here, in this world, call it unreal, material, or what we will ; it is up to us to make the best of things as we find them, and to do our utmost to improve them. Thus Buddhism is nothing if not practical. It is essentially a system of rationalist ethics. It has no theology and no creed which we must believe on pain of damnation. It is a religion of conduct rather than of belief, as such. A man is saved or damned by his own thoughts, words or deeds. His salvation or damnation is not in the hands of any deity, but in his own.

It is taught that we are, each of us, at any moment, the sum total of all our past thoughts, words and deeds.

The word used to indicate this is karma, which means, literally, action; but it also means reaction, consequences. Thus whatever we think, say, or do, reacts, sooner or later, upon ourselves as a purely natural consequence of effect following upon cause.

The Buddha denied the existence of a soul as a separate entity capable of living apart from the body. But he also taught re-birth, namely, the re-expression of the ego-identity in life after life. This proves a puzzle to many Europeans, and also to some Indians. Thus Sir Hari Singh Gour (a Hindu), in a recent book*, purporting to be an exposition of Buddhism, stumbles badly over it. It should be understood that what we call the ego, and consider to be our "self," is no more than a form of energy—physical or psychical, consider it as we please, for there is no distinction between the two—which continues to express itself over and over again, in such forms and directions as its karma may determine. There is nothing metaphysical or mystical about it. The difference between what we call physical and psychical is that the one is tangible and the other is not. They are interdependent. There can be no psychic activity without a physical basis. It is taught that there are many other spheres, or planes, of being than the earth, composed, on their objective side, of rarer, more attenuated matter. Even the "devaloka," or "heaven-worlds," exhibit the same characteristics as does this world of grosser matter. Both are under the same laws of arising, transition and passing away, and the beings inhabiting each are equally subject to karma.

We are, all of us, at this moment, just what we are, strong or weak physically or mentally, clever or

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* *The Spirit of Buddhism*, by Sir Hari Singh Gour. (Luzac.).

stupid, born—or, to use the Buddhist term, "arising" —in this or that environment, under such and such conditions, exactly as the result of our karma extending back into the infinite past. We shall be, in the future, what we are making ourselves now. Once this is clearly understood and acted upon, then, and not before, we become masters of our own destiny. We have few to thank, and certainly none to blame, for whatever happens to us, good or evil.

The Buddha taught perfection of conduct in thought, word and deed, the highest morality that has ever been set before mankind, as the only way of escaping from the otherwise eternal "round" of birth, transition, decay, death and re-birth—over and over again. If one lives up to standard, he attains to the state called Nirvana, here in this life. By Nirvana is meant, not annihilation, but a state of mind into which no thoughts of anger or ill will, nor any desire for sensual things, can enter. Then, after this life, the just man made perfect passes out of the mundane sphere, and enters into the Eternal Peace, where there is no more re-birth, nor transition, nor suffering.

Such, very briefly, and in barest outline, was the teaching of the Buddha. In promulgating it, he ignored caste altogether. Whosoever became his disciple renounced his caste. The Buddha's pronouncement was: "As the four rivers which fall into the Ganges lose their names as soon as they mingle their waters with the holy stream, so all who follow my teaching cease to be kshatriyas, brahmins, vaisyas, or sudras." Thus we find princes and peasants, brahmins and barbers, warriors, traders and servants joining the religious Order (Sangha), which the Buddha founded, on equal terms. It was the first thoroughly democratic organisation in the history of the world.

But its members are not priests. The Buddha was well aware of the evils of priestcraft; they were already becoming evident among the brahmins. He therefore laid down certain rules which define the functions and control the lives of those who join the Order. These make it impossible for them to dominate or tyrannise over the laity. They are called bhikkhus, or monks, but they have no sacerdotal standing or authority; in fact, there is nothing in Buddhism to be "sacerdotal" about! Buddhism, in its purest form, is found to-day in Ceylon, Burma and Siam. In the northern countries, Tibet, Mongolia, China and Japan, there are forms of Buddhism which are greatly corrupted, and these have developed a priesthood. A study of this debased Buddhism, as contrasted with that of the southern countries, shows how wise the Buddha was in laying down those rules.*

That the teaching of the Buddha was successful, that his religion was firmly established in his own lifetime, and that it became the dominant religion in India, prove two things—first, the tremendous personality of the Buddha, and secondly, the fact that the brahmin caste had not yet attained the power which it arrogated to itself in later centuries. It indicates a freedom of thought and expression, and social liberties, such as compare favourably with our own modern conditions. It certainly shows an India very different from that which we see to-day.

As regards the position of the castes, the Buddha definitely claimed superiority for the kshatriyas:

> So it is clear, whether you regard it from the male or from the female side, that it is the kshatriyas who are the best people, and the brahmanas their inferiors. Moreover,

* See *The Religion of Tibet*, by J. E. Ellam. (John Murray.).

it was the Brahma Sanam Kumara who said, "The kshatriya is the best among folk who heed lineage. He who knows and acts aright is best among gods and men." Now this stanza, Ambatta, was well sung and not ill sung by the Brahma Sanam Kumara, well said and not ill said, sensible and not senseless. I, too, Ambatta, join in saying that the kshatriya is best among folk who heed lineage.*

There is also the charming story of the Buddha's disciple, Ananda. He, being thirsty, asked a Matanga girl named Prakriti for water to drink. Matanga means of low birth, and is one of the subdivisions of the sudras, comprising mongrels of the lowest and higher castes. The girl said: "O brahman, I am too humble to give you water to drink, do not ask any service of me lest you be defiled, for I am of low caste." Ananda replied: "I ask thee, not for caste, but for water." The girl then went to the place where the Buddha was, and listened to his teaching which concluded with the words: "Blessed art thou, Prakriti, for though you are a Matanga, you will be a model for noblemen and noble-women. You are of low caste, but brahmins will learn a lesson from you. Swerve not from the path of righteousness, and you will outshine the royal glory of queens on the throne."

Such incidents as these, and many are recorded in the Buddhist books, indicate one of the reasons why Buddhism obtained its hold on the people. Another reason is the extreme simplicity of its elementary principles. There is nothing to fog the mind; it is clear, straightforward, and very much to the point.

The Buddhist scriptures, written in the Pali language, are called the Tipitaka, or "three baskets," a collection divided into three categories. The first is the Sutta Pitaka, or sermons and discourses of the

* *Ambatta Sutta.*

Buddha; the second is the Vinaya Pitaka, or rules of the Order; the third, the Abhidhamma Pitaka, is concerned with profound psychological inquiries.

The Buddha's teachings were not committed to writing until about 250 years after his death. The Buddhists, like the brahmins, memorised them. Immediately after the death of the Buddha, it is stated that several hundreds of his disciples assembled at Pataliputta (Patna) and chanted over the doctrine (dhamma) until they had it word perfect and in unison. This was the first Buddhist Council. A hundred years later a second Council was held to settle certain disputes which had arisen between the more and the less strict of the brethren (sangha).

The books were first compiled at the third Council convened by the Emperor Asoka, and written in the Magadhi (Pali) language. They are voluminous, and enable us to understand, very clearly, what the India of the Buddhist period was like. It was a free India, a liberal-minded India, whose class divisions were not too strictly defined.

Thus we read of a kshatriya, a king's son, who, in pursuance of a love affair, apprenticed himself successively to a potter, a basket-maker, a florist, and a cook, without a word being said as to loss of caste when his action became known. Another prince resigned his share in the kingdom in favour of his sister, and turned trader. A third prince went to live with a merchant and earned his living "by his hands." A noble (kshatriya) took service for wages with an archer. A brahmin became a trader so that he might earn money to give away in charity. A brahmin was employed as an assistant to an archer who had himself previously been a weaver. Brahmins lived as hunters and trappers. A brahmin worked as a wheelwright.

Brahmins are also frequently mentioned as engaged in agriculture, and as hiring themselves out as cowherds, or even as goatherds. "The fact is that the claim of the priests to social superiority had nowhere in India been then, as yet, accepted by the people." *

Although a priest must be a brahmin, not all brahmins are priests. Thus we find the brahmin doing almost anything. He may be a merchant, a farmer, a usurer, a butcher and dealer in flesh, a pander, a fortune-teller, a juggler, a robber, a servant—anything that he should not be if his caste claim is based upon anything but pretension. It *is* pretension pure and simple, sheer humbug and imposture. A brahmin of my acquaintance once undertook to show me round a certain city in India. We went into many places, and he did many things, ate food and drank strong waters in a manner that no brahmin should do if he really believes in caste. I asked him about it, and he replied, laughing, with the saying often heard in India: "Where there is no eye, there is no caste!"

According to the Buddhist chronology, the Buddha was born on the full-moon day of the month of Wesak (May) 543 B.C., and he died, at the age of eighty years, on the same day of the same month in the year 463 B.C.

We know little of what transpired for 150 years after this. But it is certain that Buddhism spread rapidly all over India. Buddhism was the first great missionary religion. The Buddha's injunction was: "Go ye, O disciples, and wander forth for the gain of the many, the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, the gain, the welfare of men. Publish the Doctrine glorious! Proclaim a life of holiness, perfect and pure!"

* Rhys Davids, *Buddhist India.*

There can be no doubt that they obeyed him, for we read of the bhikkhus in their yellow robes going to Kashmir, to the Himalayas, to the border lands on the Indus, to South India and Ceylon. Later, they penetrated westward to Asia Minor, Egypt and Eastern Europe, eastward to Burma, China, Mongolia and Japan, and southward to Java and the islands of the seas.

Buddhism overshadowed, but did not supplant, its rival, Brahminism. The latter had been, by this time, long established, and the two religions existed side by side, so far amicably. Toleration and sympathy are two outstanding characteristics of Buddhism, and Brahminism had, perforce, to display the first, for its priests were not, as yet, predominant. But the brahmins were working towards this end with steady determination. When they did finally get the upper hand, they behaved as priests claiming "divine sanction" always do.

The brahmins never aspired to kingship. They aimed at what would, and eventually did, give them a greater power, even over kings. They were essentially the educated class among the Hindus (as distinct from the Buddhist bhikkhus), and, by virtue of this, they became the ministers, advisers and counsellors of monarchs. They claimed, not only to have been divinely ordained for the priestly office, to the exclusion of all others, but for the exercise of such temporal powers as have been mentioned. For authority they appealed to the books which they themselves had written, and they further claimed the sole right of interpreting them. They declared themselves to be the spiritual and temporal representatives of the gods on earth. The religion of the Buddha ignored these pretensions, and thereby earned their lasting enmity.

The next important period begins with the invasion of the Indus valley by the Greeks. Darius, the Persian monarch, sent out an expedition about 500 B.C., when some annexation took place. We hear of Indian archers fighting against the Greeks at Plataea in 479 B.C. But it was Alexander the Great who penetrated into India, as far as the Punjab, in 327 B.C. He met with desperate resistance, but his opponents were divided into a number of small principalities whose mutual jealousies enabled him to conquer them one by one. In the end they combined, and he was unable to maintain his hold. He therefore marched home, losing a large number of his men, most of his animals, and all his booty in the deserts of Baluchistan.

This struggle, and the disturbance caused by it, gave an exile from Magadha (Behar) named Chandragupta, who had made himself chief of a clan of robbers, his opportunity. It is evident, from the events which followed, that this Chandragupta was a man of unusual ability. He proclaimed himself king, conquered Magadha, and eventually established the mightiest throne that had, so far, existed in India, or even in the world. He founded the Maurya Empire, and extended it from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, over an area almost equal to that of the British Indian Empire to-day. Some idea of his power may be gained from the description of his army by Megasthenes, the Greek historian. It consisted of 600,000 infantry, 300,000 cavalry, and 9,000 elephants—more than a million men. Chandragupta was known to the Greeks as Sandrokottos. It was the identification of these two names that established the first fixed point in the chronology of ancient India.

Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C., and was succeeded by Seleukos, who endeavoured to emulate

him. But Seleukos found himself opposed by Chandragupta and a consolidated empire. He realised that the odds against him were too great, for no battle was fought. A truce was proclaimed, and a treaty made whereby the Greek conquests in the Kabul valley and the Punjab were ceded to Chandragupta. Seleukos is said to have confirmed this by giving his daughter in marriage to the Indian king. He also sent an ambassador to Chandragupta's court. This was the famous Megasthenes, who remained there from 306 to 298 B.C.

Megasthenes wrote a description of what he observed. Unfortunately the original has been lost, and all that survives of it are fragments in the form of quotations by later writers. From these, however, we are able to learn something of the conditions in India at that time. A high standard of civilisation is indicated, an elaborate and thoroughly organised administration, and a well-ordered state of society.

There was a War Office, with six departments for the control of the various branches of the service, and an Admiralty. The troops were well armed and equipped with adequate transport. The cavalry were armed with two lances and a small buckler. The infantry carried broad, heavy swords, and, in addition, some had bows and arrows and others javelins for throwing, and shields of undressed ox-hide. From this circumstance it would seem that the ridiculous cow-worship of the modern Hindu had not then been thought of. There was a chariot corps, each chariot carrying two fighting men and a driver, and drawn by two or four horses. On the line of march oxen drew the chariots in order to keep the horses fresh. The elephant corps was regarded as of great

importance, and was doubtless formidable. Each animal carried three fighting men and a driver.

There was also what we would describe as a Civil Service, divided into six branches. Of these, the first supervised the industrial arts. The second looked after the welfare of foreign subjects resident in the capital, and doubtless saw to it that they engaged in no plotting or spying. The third compiled registers of births and deaths. The fourth superintended trade and commerce, and acted as inspectors of weights and measures. The fifth superintended the sale of all manufactured goods. The sixth collected the tax of ten per cent. on all articles sold. In addition there were officers who maintained order (police), superintended the waterways, sluices and roads, and surveyed the land.

The description of the capital city, Pataliputta, as quoted by Arrian, although short, gives an idea of its size and magnificence:

> The greatest city in India is that which is called Palimbothra [Pataliputta] in the dominions of the Prasians, where the streams of the Erannoboas [a Greek corruption of Hirannavati] and the Ganges unite. . . . Megasthenes informs us that this city stretched in the inhabited quarters to an extreme length on each side of eighty stadia [nearly ten miles], and that its breadth was fifteen stadia [nearly two miles], and that a ditch encompassed it all round, six hundred feet in breadth and thirty cubits [forty-five feet] in depth, and that the wall was crowned with five hundred and seventy towers and four-and-sixty gates. The same writer tells us this remarkable fact about India, that all the Indians are free, and that none of them is a slave.

Excavations in recent times, on the site of this city, prove that Megasthenes' account was by no means exaggerated. It doubtless rivalled, or even exceeded,

anything that has succeeded it, and was the fitting capital of the greatest consolidated sovereign power that ruled in India before the advent of the British. Professor T. W. Rhys Davids compares its area with London.

> Ten miles along the river is just the distance from the Tower of London to Hammersmith Bridge; or, if taken in a straight line, is the distance from Greenwich to Richmond; and from the river at Chelsea Embankment to the Marble Arch is just two miles south to north. All of London from the Tower to the Houses of Parliament, and from the river to the Hampstead Hills, would occupy about the same space. But . . . the native records confirm the impression that then, as now, Indian towns tended to cover a vast extent. And we may probably accept the estimate made by Megasthenes of the size of the city wherein he dwelt.*

Megasthenes refers to the castes, but enumerates seven instead of the original four. These were: (1) philosophers, by which he may mean brahmins only, or, more probably, scholars, including both brahmin priests and Buddhist bhikkhus, recluses and "holy men" generally, (2) agriculturists, (3) shepherds, (4) artisans, (5) soldiers, (6) inspectors, and (7) councillors. From the order in which these are given, and also from the fact that the traders, and the labourers and servants (sudras), are not mentioned, Megasthenes seems to have been somewhat at fault. Among the philosophers, "sarmanai" (sramana) are mentioned. This is interesting as indicating the Buddhist Order.

Megasthenes tells us that the people required no locks for their doors, and that no Indian was ever

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* *Buddhist India.*

known to tell a lie! One is moved to remark that it is a pity that Indians have not maintained this high standard of honesty and truthfulness. The late Lord Curzon seems to have been mistaken when he said that the highest ideal of truth was to a great extent a Western conception, and that the truth took a high place in the moral codes of the West before it had been similarly honoured in the East. Had he modified his observation so as to apply to modern India, he would have been more accurate. But there may be an explanation. In these days of anti-British feeling, it is probably considered meritorious to rob a European as one of the practical applications of Swaraj. As for the truth, there is a saying that a white man is not entitled to it!

Megasthenes says that the Indians seldom had recourse to lawsuits. To-day this is a favourite pastime with those who can afford it, and with many who cannot. It is to be feared that we are, in some measure, responsible for the country being afflicted by a veritable plague of English-educated vakils, pleaders and attorneys. If these men cannot make a living by their profession—and the majority cannot—they take to politics and political journalism, and become thorns in the side of the long-suffering British Raj. Thus we are punished for the crime of creating them!

It is interesting to learn that, under Chandragupta, "all India is the property of the Crown, and no private person is allowed to own land." The occupier tilled the land "on condition of receiving one-fourth of the produce." Contrast this with the statement of the Swarajists that India is ground down by the taxation of the British Government, and the fact that she is actually the lightest taxed country in the world. There is another point that should be of interest to those who

preach and practice non-co-operation. In Chandragupta's time evasion of taxation was punished by mutilation or death!

Whether that caste of insatiable vampires, the bunyas, or moneylenders, was then in existence, we do not know. If so, the unfortunate ryot must have been in desperate straits indeed! We shall return to these points when we come to consider the causes of India's poverty, and the land system.

CHAPTER III

THE GOLDEN AGE

When Was It?—The Emperor Asoka—The Edicts—India Civilised—Brahmin Intrigue—Decay of the Mauryas—Decline of Buddhism—Rise of Brahminism—Caste Made Rigid—Degeneration of the Hindus—Persecution of Buddhism—Hinduism as it is To-day.

WHEN Indians, discontented with British rule, wish to be particularly impressive, they draw a fanciful picture of what they describe as the "Golden Age" of India. Asked to say precisely when this was, they usually become incoherent. They don't know!

There was, certainly, no Golden Age in existence when the East India Company established itself in the seventeenth century. India was then in the throes of internal warfare, and it was largely the necessity of settling the country that caused the British to take a hand. There was no desire on our part to establish an empire. This was forced upon us by conditions intolerable both to the peoples of India and to ourselves; conditions caused by warlike rivalry between various kings and maharajas, and also by the intrigues of the French, who joined some of these against us, up to the decisive battle of Plassey in 1757.

Nor was it during the centuries before that, for, tracing backwards to the beginning of the Christian Era, there is no sign of a Golden Age. It was not

under the Grand Moguls in the sixteenth century, nor in the time of Tamerlane, nor when the Mongol hordes swept down under Genghis Khan at the beginning of the thirteenth century, nor during the Mohammedan ascendancy, for there was constant warfare with the Hindus in one part of the country or another. It was not during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when India was over-run and wasted with fire and sword by the Afghans; nor during any of the centuries before that, back to the break-up of the Maurya Empire which began soon after the death of Asoka in 222 B.C., for there came the Scythians, the White Huns, and many other raiders in succession.

The Gupta period, which commenced about A.D. 380, and was described by the Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien, has been called a "golden age." So it may have been from the brahmin point of view, for it was then that they began their work of rooting out Buddhism.

If ever there was a Golden Age in India, when the people were well and wisely governed, when the welfare of all classes of the community was sedulously fostered, a period of peace and prosperity, of legislation inspired by high ideals of humanity and social service, it was during the reign of Asoka, the grandson of Chandragupta. And it was the Hindus themselves who destroyed it.

There is a tradition that Chandragupta abdicated about 298 B.C. in order to become a religious ascetic. He was succeeded by his son, Bindusara, who died about 270 B.C.*

Bindusara does not seem to have achieved anything remarkable, though he was known as

* The dates are those of Professor T. W. Rhys Davids. Romesh Dutt (*The Civilisation of India*) gives them as 290 and 260 B.C.

Amitraghatta, a title meaning "Slayer of Enemies," suggesting that he was of a warlike disposition.

Asoka, Bindusara's son, was undoubtedly by far the noblest and most benevolent monarch who ever reigned in India. Of him it is truly said:

> If the greatness of a man may be measured by the number of hearts that cherish his memory, and by the number of lips that have uttered, and still utter, his name with reverence, then surely Asoka is greater than Cæsar or Charles the Great.*

It is not from the brahmins that we learn anything about Asoka. They not only ignored his very existence for more than a thousand years, but did all they could to efface the memory of his life and works. Eventually, when there was no danger from his influence and example, and when they had practically stamped Buddhism out of India, they condescended to include his name in a list of kings. They preserved the tradition, but kept it to themselves until the evidence was brought to light from other sources.

But for the Edicts inscribed on rocks and pillars by Asoka himself, the Chronicles of Ceylon, and other Buddhist writings, we should have known nothing about him. The Rock Edicts are thirty-five in number, variations of thirteen so far discovered. They are inscribed in what were then conspicuous places all over the Empire, from the Indus to Orissa, north to south, and from east to west, from Orissa to Kathiawar, and thence southward as far as Mysore. They were discovered, deciphered and translated, not by Indian, but by European archæologists. The Indians knew nothing of them in the later centuries. They

* Koeppen: *Religion des Buddha.*

were entirely lost. It was the policy of the brahmin priests that they should be forgotten, together with the religion that inspired them. It is thought that others remain to be found.

From these Edicts, and from the Ceylon Chronicles, we are able to picture, very vividly, what the condition of India was at that period. The accuracy of the Chronicles has been questioned, and they are certainly open to criticism; but the contemporary Edicts enable us to check them with the result that the Chronicles become more credible.

In the earlier years of his reign, Asoka, like most other Oriental monarchs, had to fight to maintain his throne and the integrity of his empire. He was opposed by his brother, and it was only after a severe struggle, in the course of which the brother was killed, that Asoka made good his position. Then came a war between Magadha and Kalinga, the most powerful of the kingdoms outside the Empire. The slaughter and the inevitable suffering and death inflicted upon innocent non-combatants always involved by war, led to Asoka's conversion. He says, in the Thirteenth Rock Edict:

> Kalinga was conquered by his Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King when he had been consecrated eight years. One hundred and fifty thousand persons were thence carried away captive, one hundred thousand were there slain, and many times that number died.
>
> Directly after the annexation of Kalinga, began his Sacred Majesty's zealous protection of the Law of Piety,* his love of that Law, and his giving instruction in that Law. Thus arose His Majesty's remorse for having conquered Kalinga, because the conquest of a country previously unconquered involves the slaughter, death and

* *Dhamma*—the Teaching of the Buddha.

carrying away captive of the people. This is a matter of profound sorrow and regret to His Sacred Majesty.

There is, however, another reason for His Sacred Majesty feeling still more regret, inasmuch as in such a country dwell brahmins or ascetics, or men of various denominations or householders, upon whom is laid this duty of harkening to superiors, harkening to father and mother, harkening to teachers, and proper treatment of friends, acquaintances, comrades, relatives, slaves and servants, with fidelity of attachment. To such people in such a country befalls violence, or slaughter, or separation from their loved ones. Or misfortune befalls the friends, acquaintances, comrades and relatives of those who are themselves well protected, while their affection is undiminished. Thus for them also this is a mode of violence. And the share of this that falls on all men is a matter of regret to His Sacred Majesty; because it is never the case that people have not faith in some one denomination or other.

Thus of all the people who were slain, done to death, or carried away captive in Kalinga, if the hundredth or the thousandth part were to suffer the same fate, it would now be a matter of regret to His Sacred Majesty. Moreover, should anyone do him wrong, that, too, must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty, if it can possibly be borne with. Even upon the forest folk in his dominions His Sacred Majesty looks kindly and he seeks their conversion, for (if he did not) repentance would come to His Sacred Majesty. They are bidden to turn from evil ways that they be not chastised. For His Sacred Majesty desires that all animate things should have security, self-control, peace of mind and joyousness.

And this is the chiefest conquest, in the opinion of His Sacred Majesty, the conquest by the Law of Piety—and this, again, has been won by His Sacred Majesty both in his own dominions and in all the neighbouring realms as far as six hundred leagues—where the Greek (Yona) King named Antiochos dwells, and north of that Antiochos to where dwell the four kings severally named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas, and Alexander; and in the south the realms of the Cholas and Pandyas, as far as the Tamraparni [river] likewise—and here, too, in the King's dominions, among the Greeks, and Kambojas, the Nabhapantis

of Nabhaka; among the Bhojas and Pitinikas, among the Andhras and Pulindas—everywhere men follow His Sacred Majesty's instruction in the Law of Piety. Even where the envoys of His Sacred Majesty do not penetrate, there, too, men hearing His Sacred Majesty's ordinance, based on the Law of Piety and his instruction in that Law, practise and will practise the Law.

And, again, the conquest thereby won everywhere is everywhere a conquest full of delight. Delight is found in the conquests made by the Law. That delight, however, is only a small matter. His Sacred Majesty regards as bearing much fruit only that which concerns the other world.

And for this purpose has this pious Edict been written, in order that my sons and grandsons, who may be, should not regard it as their duty to conquer a new conquest. If, perchance, conquest should please them, they should take pleasure in patience and gentleness, and regard as (the only true) conquest the conquest won by piety. That avails for both this world and the next. Let all joy be in effort, because that avails for both this world and the next.*

I give this Edict in full. It throws a stronger light on the character of the great Maurya Emperor than any history or biography, written by another hand, could possibly do. As in the case of all the others, it was undoubtedly inscribed directly from the dictation of the Emperor himself. Of particular interest is the reference to the Greek kings, showing that there was intercourse between them and the kingdom of Magadha.

King Asoka actively promoted the missionary activities of the Buddhist bhikkhus. There can be no doubt that they reached Palestine, Greece and Egypt. The inspiration, if not the actual origin, of that very un-Jewish community, the Essenes, was

* Translation by Vincent A. Smith.

probably Buddhist. Josephus names them Essenes and Essaioi. The plural of the Pali word Isi, a sage, is Isino or Isayo. Asoka sent a religious mission to Ceylon, headed by his son, Mahinda, and accompanied by his daughter, Sanghamitra, who took with her a cutting from the bodhi tree under whose shade the Buddha attained enlightenment. The cutting was planted at Anuradhapura, where it is still growing, the oldest historical tree in the world. The last time I was there, the venerable mahathero of the temple allowed me to take a few leaves which form a direct link with the Buddha himself.

The other Rock Edicts are, briefly, to the following effect:

I.—Prohibits the slaughter of animals for sacrifice. (This would hardly be approved by the brahmin priests!)

II.—Refers to great public works, roads, irrigation, the provision of wells and tanks, hospitals "both for men and beasts," the cultivation of medicinal herbs, roots and fruits, and the planting of trees.

III.—Enjoins a quinquennial Buddhist visitation for the spreading of the doctrine; obedience to parents, liberality to friends, relatives, holy men, and others; abstention from the killing of living creatures; and the practice of economy. Officials are to be appointed by the Buddhist monasteries for the purpose of proper control.

IV.—Defines the King's practice of religion.

V.—Appoints religious ministers (bhikkhus) and missionaries who are not merely to preach, but practically to help the poor and the aged, and to prevent wrongful imprisonment.

VI.—Appoints instructors who are to advise the people in all matters pertaining to their social and

domestic affairs; also enjoins the prompt dispatch of official business. The King says that he is himself, at all times and in all places, accessible "for the welfare of all folk."

VII.—Urges the practice of self-control, purity of heart, gratitude and fidelity, as the essence of true religion. "The signs of true religion are good will, love, truthfulness, nobility and goodness."

VIII, IX, X and XI. are to similar effect, recommending pious pastimes and enjoyments, the imparting of religious and moral instruction, correct ceremonial, the proper treatment of dependents, and kindness to animals. "Not superstitious rites, but kindness to servants and underlings, respect to those deserving of respect, coupled with kindness in dealing with living creatures; these, and virtuous deeds of like nature, are verily the rites that ought everywhere to be performed."

XII.—Lays down the famous rule of toleration which some consider to have been one of the contributory causes of the decline of Buddhism when the brahmins began to plot against and corrupt it. "No decrying of other sects, no depreciating of others without cause; but, on the contrary, a rendering of honour to other sects for whatsoever in them is worthy of honour. By so doing, both one's own sect will be helped forward and other sects benefited; by acting otherwise, one's own sect will be destroyed in the injuring of others."

XIII.—Has been given above.

Of the Pillar Edicts:

I.—Directs the religious ministers (bhikkhus) to work with zeal.

II.—Sets forth religion as mercy, charity, truth and purity.

III.—Enjoins self-examination and the avoidance of evil.

IV.—Defines the duties of certain officials (rajukas) entrusted with furthering the welfare of the people, and lays down rules regarding certain respites to be granted to criminals sentenced to death.

V.—Regulates the slaughter of animals, forbidding it where unnecessary.

VI.—Expresses the King's desire to promote the welfare and happiness of all mankind, irrespective of religious differences.

VII.—Is the longest. It refers to the planting of shady trees along the roads, and of groves of mango trees, the digging of wells every mile along the roads, and the provision of rest-houses. There are also injunctions, in which the King himself sets the example, as regards respect to the aged and kindly treatment of the poor, "yea, even of slaves and servants."

VIII.—Recounts the King's works of public utility. He says, "I have planted nyagrodha trees that they may give shade to men and animals. I have planted gardens with mangoes. I have caused wells to be dug at every half krosa (*kos*=two miles). In numerous places I have erected rest-houses for the repose of man and beast."

Recent excavations have shown that the Buddhist temples, monasteries and other public buildings were of unparalleled magnificence.

When Hindu sculpture first dawns upon us in the rails of Buddha Gaya and Bharhut, 200 to 250 B.C., it is thoroughly original, absolutely without a trace of foreign influence, but quite capable of expressing its ideas, and of telling its story with a distinctness that never was surpassed, at least in India. . . . For an honest, purposelike, pre-

Raphaelite kind of art, there is probably nothing much better to be found anywhere.*

Sir John Marshall, Director of the Archæological Survey of India, expressed the opinion that "the Buddhist carvings are the finest that India has produced, and are masterpieces in point of style and technique, unsurpassed by any of their kind in the Eastern world."

The Chinese travellers, Fa-Hien and Huien Tsang, who visited India about A.D. 400 and A.D. 630 respectively, left descriptions of the stupendous buildings then falling into ruin. All traces of them were afterwards lost until modern times.

Buddhism teaches that the main causes of evil, sin and wrong-doing are ignorance and stupidity. We may take it for granted, therefore, that the importance of education was fully realised, as it always has been in Ceylon, Burma and Siam since Buddhism was established there. In those countries, the people were literate when the Hindus (after the ascendancy of Brahminism) had sunk into the grossest illiteracy; when, in Europe, during the Middle Ages, even the nobles were unable to read or write.

The Edicts, the Ceylon Chronicles, and the Pali Scriptures, together with archæological research, enable us to reconstruct this truly Golden Age; to realise that, under Asoka, India reached the highest point of her culture and her civilisation. All the arts and crafts, sculpture, science as it was then understood, medicine, philosophy, and religion in its best and truest form, flourished as never before or since. Had the Buddhist influence continued, it is certain that India would have risen to still higher levels.

* Fergusson: *Indian and Eastern Architecture.* By "Hindu" is, of course, meant "Indian."

An illustration is afforded by modern Siam, where Buddhism is the established State religion. Although small in respect of population, Siam is the most enlightened, progressive and prosperous country in the whole of Asia. Her people, under a government not unlike that of Asoka in the sense that it is a benevolent absolutism, are the freest and the happiest. I know, having lived among them for several years. Much the same observations may be made concerning the character of the Burmese. They are the only people under the Government of India who may be considered as capable of self-government. Among the Siamese and the Burmese there is no superstition-fostering priestcraft opposed to education and progress, and no demoralising caste system.

During the reign of Asoka there were influences at work steadily undermining the vast fabric built up by Chandragupta and perfected by his grandson. The brahmin priests always hated Buddhism, as they hate it still. Yet Asoka, true to his noble principle of toleration, honoured them, and treated them with open-handed generosity. Their return for this was, as has been said, to wipe his name out of their records and to suppress all knowledge of him as far as they could. There were still only the four castes, which, under Buddhism, we may suppose would be very lightly regarded. The brahmin caste, the closest, the most exclusive "freemasonry" in the world, then began that process of steady intrigue which only required favourable conditions to bring about the desired results.

When a powerful monarch, an autocrat, favours any movement, all lesser men will at least pretend to do so. We read of the great numbers who joined

the Buddhist Order. It would be considered "the thing" to become a bhikkhu, if only to please the King. The vows of the bhikkhu are not life vows. A monk may leave the Order and return to lay life whenever he pleases without prejudice. It was doubtless customary then, as now in Buddhist countries, for men to join the Order for a period. In Siam and Burma it is regarded as a necessary part of a young man's education. We know that many brahmins joined the Order in the old days, carrying with them their own ideas, and causing a splitting up into sects. They introduced the germs of that corruption which caused the decay of Buddhism in India.

Asoka died about 222 B.C., and thereafter the Maurya Empire began to disintegrate. A period of confusion ensued which brought it to an end at the beginning of the second century B.C. Successive raids of Bactrians, Parthians, Scythians, and even Chinese, devastated the country. One tribe of invaders, known as the Kushans, came in the first Christian century. Their leader established a kingdom in the North-West. His successor, Kanishka (about A.D. 50) extended it to the proportions of an empire. Kanishka embraced Buddhism, which, by this time, was decidedly on the down grade in India. It was being badly corrupted by the importation of brahminical teachings and practices, many of which the Buddha had specifically condemned. There arose a new "school" of Buddhism which called itself the Mahayana, or "Greater Vehicle," claiming to have enlarged and "improved" upon the Buddha's teaching. As a learned Burmese Buddhist Mahathero, or Elder of the Order, expressed it to me: "The Mahayana is well named, for it needs to be a great vehicle indeed to carry all the rubbish it contains."

The Kushan Empire went down in its turn, and there was a further period of strife between rival kings and would-be kings, through which it is almost impossible to trace the sequence of events, or to know which king actually held the balance of power. None did for long! Most of these kings were Hindus, that is to say, adherents of Brahminism, and they were advised by brahmin ministers. It is then that we get the first indication of the temper of the brahmin priests in relation to Buddhism. The first persecutions began. King Pushymitra, who worshipped the gods, destroyed many Buddhist monasteries and slew the monks. A century after Kanishka, the king of Sravashti persecuted the Buddhists, and Mihirakula, a worshipper of Siva, slaughtered numbers of them.

From this time onwards the brahmins slowly, but surely, increased their hold, developing and consolidating the religion which we know to-day as Hinduism. But they did not succeed in extirpating Buddhism until about the eighth Christian century.

In the fourth Christian century, another Chandragupta established a powerful kingdom. His successor, Samagupta, extended it, and about A.D. 380 the third great Gupta king, also named Chandragupta, succeeded. He assumed the title of Vikramaditya, or "Sun of Prowess," and he reigned in splendour at Ujjain in Central India. This, the Gupta Empire, was destroyed by an invasion of the Huns from Central Asia, and again there was a period of anarchy and chaos through which it is unnecessary to wade. But the brahmins, who made themselves ministers to the various warring kings, took full advantage of their opportunities. Some of these kings were

of low caste, fighting adventurers, ignorant and superstitious. They were not the type of men to whom Buddhism would appeal, but just the right kind of material for priestcraft to work upon. It was under these conditions that the brahmins succeeded in imposing their pretensions, and in establishing Hinduism as the paramount religion.

What this means, let a modern Indian writer describe. He contrasts Buddhism with Hinduism as each may be observed at the present day:

> The difference between the devotion and worship of the Buddhist and the Hindu is seen in the contrast between a Burmese and a Hindu temple. The one has its images of the Buddha, serene and placid, reflecting on the illusions of this life. . . . The other has its obscene symbols, its monstrous idols, its incarnations of lust and evil, that are to be appeased only by the shedding of blood. See the temple of Kali in Calcutta, and the temple of the Buddha in Rangoon, and you have a contrast that all the metaphysics of the subtle Hindu mind cannot reconcile with true faith. You approach the Kali temple through reeking abominations, and behold a pit out of which flows an endless stream of unclad humanity. A wild and dark rabble,s weating the rancid oil of coconut, they look like lost souls vomited from the depths of hell, fleeing from the wrath of the hideous image whose foul face glows through the blackness. To the temple of the Buddha you ascend by marble stairs, and behold a tower of gold crowned with flashing gems and golden bells that tinkle in the sunlight. The worshippers are arrayed in shimmering silks, and bring flowers and tapers of bees' wax—not the blood of goats—to lay at the feet of the serene Buddha. This is the contrast in creed and worship, and it is written everywhere on the land and on the people throughout India and Burma.*

The caste system was made rigid, and its divisions multiplied so that, where there were only four castes,

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* Professor P. Lakshmi Narasu: *The Essence of Buddhism.*

there are now nearly 4,000! Every kind of employment or handicraft in each province of India forms a distinct caste. They cannot intermarry, and, in most cases, cannot eat together; strictly, each caste should keep to its own occupation and, as far as possible, to itself. There is no sympathy or fellow-feeling between the members of one caste and those of another. In the eyes of a Hindu, every caste lower than his own is impure. And, always, over all, is the brahmin priest. There can be no marriage, no birth, nor death, in any of the castes, but the brahmin priest must have his fee. Woe to the ryot, the agriculturist, who, at seed-time and harvest, does not pay his "tithe" to the priest!

There are many caste subdivisions, even among the brahmins. Thus there are sayings: "For three Kanouj brahmins thirty fires are needed," and: "For a dozen Rajputs [kshatriyas] thirteen kitchens are needed." Anyone who has been in India knows that there are different castes of domestic servants, and that one will not do the work of another. This means that a comparatively small household will employ at least half a dozen, idle more than half their time, where two would be sufficient. It is the same in other directions. Yet we find Labour Members, two or three of whom have actually spent a month or so in India, speaking in terms of denunciation of the low wages that must, of necessity, and for this reason, be paid in India. Fishermen are subdivided according to the appliances they use and the fish they catch. Potters are subdivided as they work standing or sitting, and so forth.

What kind of "rationalisation" or economy in industry is possible under these conditions? Many castes are named after their localities;

particularly is this the case since the aborigines became Hinduised. I have said that Brahminism is an accommodating affair. Any group of people accepting the Hindu religion may form a caste; the essential thing is that they should acknowledge the supremacy of the brahmin priest, and pay him his demanded dues.

The initiation of the brahmin into the "inner circle," as it were, as a sacrificing priest, includes the following ridiculous, and not too decent, performance. It is the simulation of a new birth. He is sprinkled with water as a symbol of seed. He feigns to be an embryo, and shuts himself up in a special hut which represents the womb. Under his robe he wears a belt and over it the skin of a black antelope; the belt stands for the navel string, and the robe and the black antelope skin represent the inner and outer membranes (the amnion and the chorion) in which the embryo is wrapped. He must not scratch himself with his nails or a stick, because he is an embryo, and an embryo scratched with nails or a stick will die. If he moves about in the hut, it is because the fœtus moves about in the womb. If he keeps his fists doubled up, it is because an unborn babe does the same. If, in bathing, he puts off the black antelope skin, but retains his robe, it is because the child is born with the amnion but not with the chorion. By these practices he is supposed to acquire, in addition to his old, natural and mortal body, a new body which is sacramental and immortal, invested with superhuman powers. Hindus believe this profoundly, hence the exaggerated deference they pay to the "twice-born" brahmins.

What the effects of the brahmin ascendancy were, another Indian, Mr. S. C. Mookerjee, has shown:

The advent of Buddhism was the dawn of the Golden Age of India in every respect. It gave freedom to women. . . . The purdah system . . . came into existence and vogue with the revival of Hinduism, on the ashes of the last and decadent phase of the post-Buddhistic age. The Hindu society had reached then a stage in its vices and indecencies that had become repulsive to the better minds of the people. And it became necessary to separate the women from the men, who could not be trusted as regards their behaviour to the gentler sex. . . . One of the causes of the downfall of the Hindus is that their society had to pass through that frightfully erotic and vulgar stage.*

Buddhism had uplifted the Indian peoples, morally and socially, but the brahmin priests never ceased to intrigue and conspire against it.

Thus it came to pass that the brahmins waged a bitter war to the knife as against the Buddhists—an uncompromising war—whenever favourable opportunities arose. . . . True, the brahmins triumphed in the end, and succeeded in driving Buddhism out of India, but alas! at what a cost to the Indian social fabric. A full and complete history of this "Brahmin-Bauddha" war has yet to be written . . . so as to be thoroughly able to grasp how in consequence the whole society had become viciously immoral, disorganised and decadent and tottering from a long time before the advent of the Mussulmans.†

The beginning of the decay of Buddhism Mr. Mookerjee believes to have been the disbandment by King Asoka of his army after the bloody war in Orissa:

Kingly power must always be based on force, and Asoka, in a fit of religious enthusiasm, disrupted the very force which had sustained him. In the hands of his descendants, the Buddhist central power dwindled through want of military force.‡

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* *The Decline and Fall of the Hindus*, b S. C. Mookerjee, Barrister-at-Law.
† *Ibid.* ‡ *Ibid.*

There is a lesson here for us to-day, for the very influences that destroyed the Buddhist civilisation are working against the British civilisation. We have, as the result of a sentimental and foolish "humanitarianism," deliberately weakened our own power. We are allowing the Hindus far more latitude than even Asoka would have done. The brahmin priests have never ceased to plot against the British as they plotted against Buddhism, and for the same reasons, namely, that their caste position, and the gross superstitions that support them, are threatened by the introduction of Western education and civilisation. This is the real root cause of the agitation against British rule in India—*this, and nothing else.*

"But the final cause of the decline of Buddhism," says Mr. Mookerjee, "was the succession of Hindu kings under the guidance of their brahmin ministers, who were wholly hostile to Buddhism, and by whom Buddhism was persecuted. It was by the incitements of Sankarachariya in A.D. 830, following upon the footsteps of Kumarila Bhatta, another great, fighting, brahmin, religious reformer from the South (*circa* A.D. 750), that the Buddhist mass population were again persecuted throughout Northern, Western and Central India. . . .

"Because corruption had eaten into the vitals of the Hindu body politic from before the Mussalman advent, it had no power of resistance left in it. It had lost the power and the virtue of effectually combining against the common enemy. One push and the fabric fell like a house of cards. . . . The Mussalman invaders were able to come in and stay to rule because, prior to that, Hindu society had become violently, disgustingly degraded and corrupt in the course of ages. . . .

"The white, contemplative figure of the Buddha lent itself easily to being converted to that of the god Shiva, whose worshipper the great Sankara avowedly was. Under his orders all the Buddha images in Buddhist temples were

converted into Shiva images by the encircling of snakes, the symbol of Shiva, round the necks of the images. . . .

"It is hard to think, at this distance of time, that cruelty, brutality, sacrilege and desecration could have gone further than it did. . . . All sense of toleration was forgotten. Sankara felt that, like his god Shiva—the Rudra, the destroyer—his mission in life was to destroy Buddhism. He was inspired by the thought that, without the destruction of Buddhism, no re-creation of Brahminism was possible. . . .

"That was how Sankara and Brahminism triumphed. The victory was won. But how it was a victory, in disrupting the backbone of the masses, which the Buddhist population of India certainly was, by the aid of the hired soldiery serving in the innumerable petty Hindu kingdoms of those days, Time and Nemesis have fully answered." *

The rise of Brahminism did not mean a revival of the older form of the Vedic religion, although it incorporated it. It introduced rites, practices and beliefs totally divergent. It invented the "trinity" of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. In addition to the older gods, it brought in new ones until the Hindu pantheon became a vast and complicated polytheism, together with a mass of tangled superstitions such as no other religion can match for stupidity, crudity, and, we may add, for viciousness.

Although the brahmin scholar will assert that there is, in reality, only One Supreme God, he is quite content that the multitude shall remain in a state of gross and, in many of its aspects, obscene idolatry. He and his kind have reduced the masses of the peoples to this by refusing them education, keeping them in a condition of blank ignorance, steeped in superstition, that they may be held down under the priests; that they may also be made to believe all the outrageous things which the brahmins

* *The Decline and Fall of the Hindus*, by S. C. Mookerjee, Barrister-at-Law.

assert about themselves. Not content with being the supreme caste, representatives of the gods on earth, they actually pretend to be gods themselves! Thus:

> By his origin, the brahmana is a god, even to the gods.
> A brahmin, be he ignorant or learned, is a great divinity. He shall not rise to receive a kshatriya or a vaisya, though they be learned.
> A brahmin may seize without hesitation, if he be distressed, the goods of a sudra.

No such claims as these would have been admitted for a moment in the time of Asoka!

Hinduism and the caste system, as they exist to-day, did not originate in far distant time. They are of comparatively recent growth, not earlier than about the eighth or ninth Christian centuries. They are the outcome of a thoroughly unscrupulous priestcraft that has no sanction from ancient usage. Even if it had, we would be justified in challenging the brahmin caste and priesthood upon every single point raised by them.

There are some people in this country who attribute to what is sometimes called "the higher Hinduism" an excellence that it does not merit. In the last chapter I pointed out that this phase of it is no more than a mass of guesses and unwarranted assumptions concerning the unseen, the unknown, and the supernatural. It is mostly verbiage of no practical application or value. Wherever the teachings of the Hindu philosophy can be tested, they are found to consist of just what we might expect—baseless classifications and more or less ingenious guesses. The genius of the Indian mind is a genius for obfuscating reason.

The *Purana* says: "Do not apply reason to what is unthinkable. The mark of the unthinkable is that it is above all material causes." And then—"Therefore the cognition of what is supersensuous is based on the holy texts only." Of course!—the holy texts as written by the priests and interpreted by them. This is characteristic of priestcraft all the world over: to frame its own authority, and, when questioned, to appeal back to itself! That kind of thing will not answer in this critical age, as the brahmins are beginning to find out, even among their own people. Then they blame Western civilisation, and denounce it as "satanic," making of unbalanced zealots, like Gandhi, their tools and mouthpieces.

The popular Hindu religion of to-day is the lowest professed and practised by any people that claims to have risen above savagery. The ordinary daily practices of Hinduism are enough to place it beyond the pale of civilisation. Beside it, the devotion of the unlettered Russian or Spanish peasant is rational and enlightened. Hinduism indicates a melancholy proclivity towards whatever is monstrous and unwholesome. It is always bathing, but never clean. It is a wholly unfiltered paganism, and until it filters, cleanses and purifies itself, India cannot claim fellowship on terms of equality with the civilised nations of the earth.*

There is a very filthy, and therefore sacred, backwater of the Hugli, at Kalighat, Calcutta, where I have myself seen men, women and children, not only bathing in their hundreds, but *drinking* the evil-smelling, yellow ooze in which their bodies—some diseased—and their garments are steeped,

* This very true observation is quoted from memory, from a source which I cannot recall.

and then they wonder at the prevalence of disease! It is more than probable that *epidemics originate in India*, and then spread over the rest of the world. Yet British efforts to enforce some kind of sanitation are held up by the Swarajists as examples of tyranny and oppression.

Another feature of Hinduism is the plague of *sadhus*, fakirs, bogus ascetics, sturdy beggars, ignorant and indecent, with their matted hair, dirty teeth, filthy bodies, and heads covered with dust and lice, who infest every Indian city. There are said to be no less than six millions of them. Assuming their upkeep at the low average of three rupees a month, this equals an annual tax of over £16 millions, which the people of India pay (in the shape of alms) to these useless, often criminal, drones. Reforms? The Hindus do not want reforms from us. What they need to do is to begin reforming themselves; then we should consider their fitness for self-government, and not before.

The fifth and the sixth centuries of the Christian Era were periods of terrific, devastating warfare and massacre. Only one name stands out at the beginning of the seventh century, that of Harsha (about A.D. 606). We might not have known of him but for the visit of Huien Tsang, who put it on record that Harsha's "elephants were not unharnessed, nor the soldiers unhelmeted" for nearly six years. But "after thirty years his arms reposed and he governed everywhere in peace." After the death of Harsha, chaos reigned again, practically up to the advent of the Mohammedans.

These events, and those which were to come, make one thing clearly evident. It is that, whenever the strong hand is lifted, or indecision shown, in

India, anarchy follows with unfailing certainty. This is being illustrated before our eyes at the present moment. But never before has the hand been voluntarily relaxed, or shown a disposition to abdicate of its own accord; and this at the behest of a handful of men who are the very reverse of being warriors! They are merely a small group of semi-Anglicised Hindus of the pusillanimous *babu* type, men who have already shown their utter incapacity in the Legislative Assembly and elsewhere. These are the men who aspire to rule India to-day, who are shaking their fists at the British Raj, and making faces at the warlike Indian princes. At the first sign of fighting they would flee into hiding; at the first gust of the storm they are invoking they would be blown away like chaff.

CHAPTER IV

MOHAMMEDAN ASCENDANCY

Arab Inroads—Mahmud of Ghazni—Mohammed of Ghor—The Slave Dynasty—The Houses of Khilji and Tughlak—Tamerlane—The Sayyids and the Lodis—Akbar the Great—Aurangzeb—Decline of the Moguls—Coming of the Europeans.

THE Mohammedan inroads began in the seventh Christian century, with raids by the Arabs whose eyes had long been gazing greedily upon the rich provinces and cities of India.

The constant warfare between the petty Hindu kings gave them their opportunity. The Rajputs, however, had established a fairly stable government, and they resisted valiantly, driving the Moslems back time after time.

In 712, the Mohammedans succeeded in overrunning and subduing Sind. By the end of the tenth century they had entered the Punjab, which, like the rest of India, was split up into numerous kingdoms. All their campaigns were waged with the utmost ferocity, every victory in the field, and the taking of every town, being followed by a general massacre.

In order to understand this temper, and the irreconcilable antagonism that has always existed, and always will exist, between the Mohammedans

and the Hindus, it is necessary to realise the Moslem point of view.

There is but One God, and Mohammed is the Prophet of God. That is all there is in "true religion." It is the only true faith; all other beliefs are false. The final argument is the sword. The very existence of any other gods, especially when represented by images, is an insult to God; it is therefore the religious duty of the Mohammedan to destroy them. All who do not believe in Allah, the God of Islam, and in His Prophet, are "infidels," and those who worship before images are idolators as well. They constitute an affront to Islam, and to slay them is an act of piety. If their lives are spared, they should regard it as a clemency to which they are not entitled, and be grateful for being allowed to live. Islam is thus a religion of narrow bigotry, fierce fanaticism, and bitter hatred.

This hatred the Hindus reciprocate to the full, and express it in the same way whenever they get the opportunity. Their retaliation, in warfare and in rebellion, took the same form when victorious—merciless slaughter of the enemies of *their* gods.

The strength of Mohammedanism lies, not only in the simplicity of its creed, but in the doctrine that all Moslems are equal in the presence and sight of God. When they unite in prayer, there is no distinction between the king and the slave. Given the ability, and the opportunities, there is nothing to prevent a slave from becoming a monarch. The Moslems are not divided by caste, and are thus able to intermarry, to live, eat and combine together, in a manner that the Hindus cannot. They are not enervated by child-marriage, and are therefore more virile and courageous, speaking generally. Except

for the pig, they have few food tabus, and they are not vegetarians. Thus they are usually more than a match for the Hindus when it comes to fighting, although inferior in numbers. Nearly 700 out of every 1,000 of the population of India are Hindus.

It was, of course, impossible for the Mohammedans to exterminate the Hindus, they were too numerous; but they did their best to reduce their numbers! The Moslem records are full of such passages as these:

> Like a pack of sharp-clawed wolves, they fell upon the flock of fox-like infidels, and dyed their swords and weapons in the blood of those wretches till streams of blood ran down the valley.
>
> He marched and captured other cities and killed the polluted wretches, destroying the idolatrous and gratifying the Mussalmans. After wounding and killing beyond all measure, his hands and those of his friends became cold in counting the value of the plundered property.
>
> God bestowed upon his friends such an amount of booty as was beyond all bounds and calculation, including five hundred thousand slaves, beautiful men and women.

They also destroyed such Buddhist temples and monasteries as remained, slaughtering their inmates, thus completing the extirpation of Buddhism which the Hindus had begun. But the Moslems did not have it all their own way by any means. They frequently sustained severe defeats, when they met with a similar fate, recording it in such expressions as:

> After slaying many of the infidels, they finally drank the sherbet of martyrdom.

Mahmud of Ghazni led the Afghans into India no less than seventeen times, massacring and plundering far and wide. His first expedition was in 1001.

He sacked Mathura, one of the most splendid of the Hindu cities, for twenty days, carrying off immense booty. Concerning this city, he wrote to his governor at Ghazni:

> There are here a thousand edifices as firm as the faith of the faithful, most of them of marble, besides innumerable temples; nor is it likely this city has attained its present condition but at the expense of many millions of dinars, nor could such another be constructed under a period of two centuries.

But his admiration did not cause him to stay his hand; it only whetted his appetite for the spoils. During his last foray he looted the vast hoarded wealth of the famous fort-temple of Somnath. "The treasure found at Somnath," says Ferishta, the Persian historian, "was more than any royal treasury contained before." Mahmud never attempted conquest with a view to establishing a kingdom. He regarded his raids as "acts of faith," as a fitting chastisement of the "idolators," and the plunder as the rightful reward of his religious zeal.

Mohammed of Ghor was the first practical Moslem conqueror. He was decisively repulsed on his first expedition towards Delhi in 1191, when it is said that his army was pursued for over 40 miles. Disunion among the Rajput princes enabled him to defeat them on his next attempt. He occupied Delhi in 1193. Behar was conquered in 1199, and Lower Bengal, as far as the Delta, in 1203. Benares and Gwalior mark the extent of his advance to the south-west. He was assassinated in 1206, leaving the whole of the north of India from the Ganges to the Indus under his generals, who then proceeded to set up for themselves.

One of these, Kutab-ud-din, who had been a slave, proclaimed himself King of Delhi, and founded what is known as the Slave Dynasty. It lasted until 1290. The rule of the "slave kings" was one of the utmost ferocity. No man's life was safe unless he was a "true believer." To kill an idolator was a meritorious act. The Hindus were ground down by extortionate taxation levied by force. If sufficient were not forthcoming, they were killed out of hand. Kutab died in 1210. His eldest son succeeded but reigned only a short time.

Altamsh, who had been the slave of a slave, namely Kutab's, managed to secure the throne. He was vigorous and warlike, and under his iron repression the Hindus gave up the struggle for a time. Altamsh's generals controlled all India north of the Vindhya Range, including the Punjab, the North-West Provinces, Oudh, Behar, Lower Bengal, Ajmere, Gwalior, Malwa and Sind. It was at this time that the Moguls (Mongols) began to make their appearance by way of Tibet and the Himalayan passes, though, as yet, they did not penetrate far into India.

Altamsh died in 1236, and was succeeded by his daughter, Raziya. She is said to have led her armies in person, and to have dressed, ridden and fought like a man. She was assassinated in 1239. Two vicious kings followed until, in 1246, Masir-ud-din, the youngest son of Altamsh seized the throne. He reigned through nineteen turbulent years, and was succeeded by his minister, Balban, whose severity towards the Hindus was merciless. He almost exterminated the Rajputs of Mewat, south of Delhi, putting 100,000 persons of both sexes to the sword. Under his predecessors, a number of Mongol

mercenaries had been employed. They became troublesome, so Balban disposed of them by the simple but effective method of killing them all. Balban died in 1287. A weak successor met with the usual fate of such rulers in India, and the Slave Dynasty came to an end.

It was succeeded by a line of kings fully as ferocious, the first being Jalal-ud-din of Khilji. He was murdered by his nephew, Ala-ud-din, who then usurped the throne in 1295. The temper of Ala-ud-din is illustrated by the following episode, in which the Mongols were again the victims. Some of them had been converted to Islam about 1292, and 3,000 were allowed to settle near Delhi. Others followed until they became too numerous for the King's peace of mind. He therefore had 15,000 of them slain and sold their families into slavery. His reign also was one of ruthless warfare. He attacked the Rajputs, who still held out in Rajputana, but never succeeded in completely subduing them. The Rajputs prided themselves on their Aryan descent and their kshatriya ancestry. They preferred death to surrender, which they regarded as dishonour.

Ala-ud-din conquered the Deccan and forced his way far to the south of India. It was his custom to send prisoners of war to Delhi, where the leaders were trampled to death by elephants, and the rank and file butchered in cold blood. His methods of government were those of grinding tyranny and extortion. Nearly the whole of the produce of the land held by Hindus was taken from them. He declared that they would never become submissive unless reduced to poverty. "I have therefore given orders," he said, "that just sufficient shall be left them from year to year of corn, milk and curds,

but that they shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards and property."

Rebellion followed rebellion, only to be suppressed with every circumstance of brutal outrage. Even his nephews rebelled, and, when he captured them, he put out their eyes and then beheaded them. Guzerat rose, the Rajputs recovered Chitor, the Deccan revolted, and drove out the Mohammedan garrisons. Ferishta writes: "On receiving these accounts, the king bit his flesh in fury." Ala-ud-din was then sick, and the news so aggravated his ailment that he died in 1315, assisted, it is said, by poison administered by his favourite general, Kafur.

The house of Khilji lasted four or five years longer, the next king being the vicious Mubarik, whose favourite was a low-caste renegade Hindu named Khusru. This man murdered his patron and seized the throne. Although pretending to be a Mohammedan, Khusru set up Hindu idols in the mosques, and desecrated the Koran by sitting upon it. The result was that his soldiers mutinied and killed him. This ended the Khilji Dynasty.

There followed the House of Tughlak, founded in 1320 by one Ghiyas-ud-din, leader of the aforesaid mutiny. He had been a Turki slave, but had risen to the governorship of the Punjab. His son, Mohammed Tughlak, succeeded in 1324. He is said to have been both a scholar and an able soldier. Master of an extensive realm, he was not content, but conceived a mad scheme for the conquest of China, and 100,000 of his men perished in the passes of the Himalayas. He was utterly careless of human life, indifferent to suffering, and, as a judge, was merciless.

He founded a new capital, 800 miles from Delhi,

which he named Daulatabad, and he forced the inhabitants of Delhi to remove to it. Twice he allowed them to return, and twice he drove them back on pain of death. A famine added to the horrors of one of these forced migrations. The people perished in thousands, and the king had to abandon the attempt.

His tax extortions exceeded even those of his predecessors. He increased the land tax tenfold, and in some places twentyfold. The unfortunate ryots fled into the jungles. Mohammed then devised a man-hunt unparalleled in its wickedness. He would order troops to surround a large area, and then the circle closed in. All found within it, men, women and children, were slaughtered like wild beasts. Among other atrocities he ordered a general massacre of the inhabitants of the great city of Kanauj. These excesses led to famine, and the miseries of the country exceeded all description.

The Mongols were now pushing more and more into India. Mohammed drained his treasury in a vain effort to buy them off. He resorted to the desperate expedient of debasing his coinage. This caused more ruin, and finally general rebellion, both among his Mohammedan and Hindu subjects. His own nephew rebelled, was taken prisoner and flayed alive. The governor of the Punjab did the same, was captured and cruelly put to death. The Mohammedan governors of Lower Bengal, and on the Coromandel coast, broke away, and could not be subdued. The Hindus of Karnata and Telingana drove out the Mohammedan garrisons and declared their independence. In the Deccan, the Mohammedan governors also rebelled, and the troops in Guzerat mutinied. The whole country, in fact, got out of

hand, and Mohammed died in 1351 whilst endeavouring to crush the rebels in the Indus Valley.

His son, Firuz Tughlak, succeeded, and seems to have ruled more reasonably, but he was unable to remedy the ruin wrought by his father. The whole realm was racked and riven by rebellion and mutiny, which made it an easy prey to the Mongols who now descended in earnest under Tamerlane (Timur) in 1398.

Tamerlane captured Delhi, after defeating the last of the Tughlaks, Mahmud. For five days the unfortunate inhabitants of the city were massacred until "the streets were rendered impassable by heaps of dead." Meantime Tamerlane held a great feast in honour of his victory. Then, in the marble mosque on the banks of the Jumna, he offered up "a sincere and humble tribute of praise to God"! On the last day of 1398 he continued his march, which included a great massacre at Meerut. Finally he withdrew to Central Asia (1399), leaving behind him widespread devastation and the wreck of plundered cities.

There followed two other dynasties, the Sayyids (1414-1450) and the Lodis (1450-1526), whose power was much curtailed, and who achieved nothing remarkable. In 1526 came the Mongol invasion under Babar which led to the establishment of the Mogul Empire. Babar advanced into the Punjab in 1526 and took Delhi. In the following year he defeated the Rajputs, and thereafter proceeded to assert himself in the Southern Punjab as far as Multan, and Behar in the eastern valley of the Ganges, establishing an empire which extended from the river Amu in Central Asia to the borders of the delta of the Ganges in Lower Bengal. Babar seems to have had

no great opinion of India. In his memoirs he writes:

> Hindustan is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society. They have no genius, no intellectual comprehension, no politeness, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicrafts, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture. They have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food or bread in their bazaars, no baths or colleges, or candles or torches—never a candlestick!

After all they had gone through during the preceding centuries he could hardly expect them to be, or to have, very much! Yet, in his memoirs, Babar states that Hindus were employed in various governmental and administrative posts. He thus anticipated Akbar to some extent.

Babar died in 1530, and was succeeded by his son, Humayun, whose reign was one of constant warfare. He died in 1556, and was succeeded by his son, Akbar, who was the real founder of the Mogul Empire.

Through all their centuries of effort, the Mohammedans never succeeded in subduing the whole of India. They failed in numerous campaigns. Many Hindu kingdoms threw off the Moslem yoke, and others maintained their independence. Into the history of these struggles it is unnecessary to enter. It is the same dreary tale of bloodshed. The Mohammedans, nevertheless, established themselves as the strongest and most formidable power in India, right down to the nineteenth century.

Akbar the Great was the first of the Mohammedan

rulers who had ideas beyond murder and pillage. He fought when compelled to do so, but preferred a policy of concession and pacification where possible. The early years of his reign were occupied in suppressing rebellions, including those of his own generals in Malwa, Oudh and Allahabad. He subjugated Behar, and extended his power southward as far as Gondwana. Most of the Rajputs he won over by tact and conciliation, with the exception of those of Chitor, who were only overcome after a long struggle. Even then they fled to the mountains, deserts and waste places, emerging afterwards to recover their old dominions.

Akbar conquered Northern India and Bengal. Kabul came under his rule on the death of his brother Hakim, and Kashmir in 1586. Sind was conquered in 1592, and Kandahar was taken two years later. He thus extended his empire from the heart of Afghanistan, across India north of the Vindhya Hills, eastward to Orissa, and southward to Sind. In Southern India he was less successful, but eventually pushed as far as Khandesh in the Deccan.

His policy was more sensible and statesmanlike than that of his predecessors. He appointed Hindus to positions of trust. His finance minister, Raja Todar Mall, was a Hindu. To others he gave commands in the army. He abolished the hated *jaziah* tax on non-Moslems. He respected the Hindu religion as far as his own would allow, though he tried to suppress its inhuman rites. Suttee he abominated, but was unable to do more than insist that it should be voluntary, and he legalised the remarriage of Hindu widows. He forbade child-marriage before the age of puberty, and stopped animal sacrifices. At least, he passed laws to this

effect, but whether he was able to enforce them is another matter.

The earliest Europeans who visited the court of Akbar affected to be horrified at the summary justice there dealt out, and the cruel punishments, which included impalement. But, at that time, Europeans had small right to criticise, seeing that judicial torture was part of their own penal law. Akbar was equally amazed to learn that the Portuguese burned heretics, and that the Inquisition tortured them. He himself loved to hear debates between the partisans of different creeds; Brahmins, Moslems, Jews, Jesuits, Fire-worshippers, and even sceptical philosophers, were invited to set forth their views. Akbar would seem to have been a good deal of a "free-thinker," or a deist, for he eventually elaborated a new religion which he called "The Divine Faith," based upon natural theology, comprising what appeared to him to be the best practices of all known religions. He was therefore accused of latitudinarianism by the stricter Mohammedans. This breadth of view, however, was doubtless one of the contributory causes of his success in controlling his widely extended dominions, though it was neither so well-founded, nor so intelligent, as that of Asoka, of whom he had probably never heard.

His civil administration seems to have been no less enlightened, and a degree of prosperity prevailed such as India had not known since the Maurya Empire. Yet he laid it down as a principle of revenue "that there shall be left to every man as much as he requires for his own support till the next crop be reaped, and for that of his family, and for seed. This much shall be left to him; what remains is the land tax." If the taxation of the British Raj were on this scale,

the Swarajists would indeed be justified in denouncing it as extortion!

Akbar died in 1605, and was succeeded by his son, Jahangir. Of him it is said that he tried to govern wisely when sober! It was during the reign of Jahangir (1615) that the first English ambassador was sent to India in the person of Sir John Roe, a man of courage and sterling honesty. From his memoirs we get an interesting, and sometimes amusing, view of the Grand Mogul and his court. Jahangir, like many others who make a public parade of their religion, was apt to lapse from grace in private. Theoretically, strong drink is forbidden to Moslems and, outwardly, the Emperor was strict on this point. He forbade the use of wine to his subjects. But he made up for it when alone, in the company of boon companions. He would call for wine, and begin an argument on religion until he became "crying drunk," when he "fell to weeping and to various passions, which kept them to midnight."

A courtier unwisely alluded to one of these revels the next morning. The Emperor was shocked and inquired as to who could have engaged in such a disgraceful debauch, and he bastinadoed them so severely that one died! Sir John Roe's position at the court was by no means an easy one. The East India Company, like a good many of those who concern themselves with India to-day, knew nothing of the conditions there. The Emperor expected large presents, and the Company imagined that Roe would be, in large measure, paid by those given to him by the Emperor. Sir John records that what he received was "hoggs flesh, deare, a theefe and a whore." Those were the days of the

Puritans, so we may assume that the Englishman was by way of being somewhat prudish, and the last two gifts were probably intended as a joke at his expense, since the "whore" was "a grave woeman of forty years." Roe, needless to say, returned them both!

Jahangir died in 1627, and his son, Shah Jehan, reigned in his stead. It was he who raised the wonderful mausoleum of the Taj Mahal, which Bishop Heber described as being "designed by Titans and finished by jewellers," and other splendid buildings erected with a total disregard of cost, the money being wrung, even by torture, from his miserable subjects. Shah Jehan raised Akbar's land revenue from £17½ millions to £22 millions. His whole life was embittered by the intrigues of his family. He fell ill in 1657, was deposed and imprisoned by his son Aurangzeb, and he died a prisoner in the fort at Agra in 1666.

Aurangzeb proclaimed himself Emperor in 1658, assuming the grandiloquent title of Alamgir—Conqueror of the Universe, and he reigned until 1707. Under his rule the Mogul Empire attained its widest limits, over an area nearly as large as British India to-day. The first three years of his reign were occupied in struggles with his brothers, Dara, Shuja and Murad. The first was betrayed and put to death; the second fled to Arakan, where he perished miserably, the third was captured and executed.

Aurangzeb's reign was one of unremitting warfare. He continued the effort to reduce Southern India. The Mohammedan kingdoms of the Deccan, Bidar, Ahmednagar and Ellichpur he had conquered during his father's reign. Bijapur and Golconda held out. During the first half of his reign his generals carried

on the war in the south. But there arose another opponent in the Deccan, the Mahrattas, who eventually proved too much for him. Had he possessed the astuteness of Akbar, he would have conciliated the Mohammedan states, and enlisted their aid against the Mahrattas.

The situation eventually became so serious that Aurangzeb had to take the field himself, and he spent the remainder of his reign, some twenty-five years, directing operations. Golconda and Bijapur were subdued and annexed, and there remained the Mahrattas. Their capital was taken, and for a long time things went badly with them; but they took to guerilla warfare, which gradually wore down Aurangzeb's army. His men became weary of the struggle, and it is said that, on occasions, they patched up temporary truces on their own account, and feasted with the enemy. In the end, Aurangzeb sought to treat with the Mahrattas, who rejected his overtures with contempt, and he died in 1707, at Ahmednagar, racked with fear lest his own sons should treat him as he had treated his father.

Aurangzeb was a narrow and bigoted Moslem. Thus he reversed the policy of Akbar. He revived the humiliating *jaziah*, or poll-tax, on non-Mohammedans. He forbade all outward display of Hindu worship, prohibited Hindu religious fairs, and destroyed many famous temples. He also passed a stupid law that no Hindu should ride in a litter, or on an Arab horse, without permission. In these and other ways he alienated the Hindus. He carried fire and sword through the Rajput States of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, burning their villages, destroying their crops, cutting down their fruit trees, and carrying off their women and children.

The Rajputs, in return, over-ran Malwa, destroyed and defaced the mosques, slew the mullahs (Moslem priests), and burned the Koran. Extortionate taxation led to revolts which were put down with the usual ferocity.

A series of similar atrocities under Aurangzeb's degenerate successors, between the years 1710 and 1716, bore bitter fruit for the Moguls in later years. These were the persecutions of the sect known as the Sikhs in the Punjab. They were goaded into rebellion, and then hunted down and killed like mad dogs. Their chief, Banda, was captured, arrayed in imperial robes, and carried about in an iron cage, exposed to public mockery and insult. His son's heart was ripped out before his eyes and flung in his face. Then he was torn to pieces with red-hot pincers. The memory of these outrages has never been forgotten, nor forgiven, by the Sikhs, even to this day.

It is estimated that Aurangzeb's net land revenue amounted to no less than between £35 and £38 millions, a sum equal to more than three times the purchasing power of the land revenue of British India at the present time. In 1695, his total revenues were estimated at £80 millions. In this connexion it may be remarked that the greater part of the revenue raised in British India is expended in the interests, and for the benefit, of the country and the people; whereas under the Moguls they got nothing out of it at all. It was wasted in extravagant luxury, and on the upkeep of vast armies for the subjection of the people who were ground down to the depths of destitution.

The luxuriant splendour of the Mogul court, and the lavish expenditure, are almost incredible. Foreign visitors were filled with amazement. One

object alone, the Peacock Throne of Shah Jehan, "with its tail blazing with the shifting, natural colours of rubies, sapphires and emeralds," was valued by the jeweller, Tavernier at £6½ millions sterling. All the appointments of the court, the Emperor's own robes and ornaments, and those of his nobles and attendants, and the equipment of his guards, were on a similar scale of magnificence. If the British Raj had ever attempted anything like this there would be good grounds for disaffection, and revolution would be justified!

I have said that the Hindus, when pressed to say when the Golden Age of India was, do not know. But I have heard them refer to the Mogul Empire in this connexion! We have seen what kind of a "golden age" it was for them. Do they wish to return to it? It would seem so, for this is what would happen if the British were to withdraw. It is usually the Hindus who make the demand for complete self-government, altogether apart from Great Britain; but there are some Mohammedans who would like it to come to pass—with a different object in view. To one of them I put the question: What would happen if we did turn the British Provinces over to the Bengali *babus*? He laughed as he replied: "Ah, Sahib! that would, indeed, be a great day for Islam!" There are those also on the borders of India, and beyond, who would welcome an opportunity of trying to restore the "glories" of the Moguls!

Let us see what some contemporary witnesses have to say. Niccolai Manucci, who was an eye-witness of what went on under Aurangzeb between 1653 and 1708, says that, after every victory, the heads of villagers were sent as booty to Agra and,

after twenty-four hours, they were placed in pillars, built for the purpose along the highway, each pillar containing 100 heads. When Aurangzeb went out against Bijapur and Golconda he had eighty men bound and beheaded in a kneeling position on either side of the road along which he was to march, "which slaughter of innocent peasants was by way of sacrifice and prayer for his success." Manucci says:

> In these days everybody's thought is to steal, and whatever happens, it rarely reaches the ears of the king, the orders coming from whom his officers do not obey. . . . In no part of the Empire is there any justice, no one thinks of anything but violence, and no remissions are allowed for loss of crops.

In 1626 there was a Dutch factory at Agra. The manager, Pelsart, wrote that India was "the home of stark want and the dwelling-place of bitter woe." If an official of the Government required workmen, they were seized wherever found, or dragged from their homes, beaten if they objected, and then paid half wages or none at all. No tradesman or shopkeeper dared to appear prosperous. If he did, he would be arrested on a false charge and all his property confiscated; probably he would be tortured into the bargain to make him say where he had concealed his supposed wealth.

One of the numerous lies constantly repeated by the Hindu malcontents is that there was little famine in India before the British went there. With this I shall deal in a subsequent chapter, pointing out that we were the first to initiate measures for coping with these calamities. Nothing of the kind was ever attempted before, unless in the far distant times of the Emperor Asoka, either by Hindu or Mohammedan

rulers. Incidentally, the Mahabharata, which has to do with India before ever Mohammedan or European set foot in it, mentions a famine of twelve years' duration, when brahmins were driven to eat dogs.

I will give a few examples of the famines that occurred during this "golden age" of the Moguls. We have seen that the ryot* was deprived of everything save his bare subsistence, and this so small as to reduce him to starvation; and that no remission was allowed in case of a failure of crops. Thus in 1596, under Akbar, there was a famine so severe that the people were driven to cannibalism, and there was a terrible pestilence. In 1615 and 1616 there were famines during which wild beasts invaded the villages, dragged the people from their huts and devoured them in the streets. In 1630, a Dutch trader, van Twist, described how men sold their wives and children, women sold themselves, mothers sold their babes, and children deserted by their parents sold themselves, whole families committed suicide, and many were driven to cannibalism so that it was dangerous to travel for fear of being killed and eaten! In 1631, 1647, 1681, 1686, 1718, 1723, 1747, 1751, 1759, 1760, 1774, 1780 and 1785 there were other famines far worse than anything of the kind that has ever occurred under British rule.

One hardly knows how to characterise the Swarajists, and their Press, when they persist in the statement that there were fewer and less severe famines in the older days.

The death of Aurangzeb marked the beginning of the rapid decline of the Mogul Empire. There

* Ryot means, literally, a herd at pasture, but is used for anyone occupying land as a cultivator. The ryots are the agriculturists, and form the mass of the Indian population.

followed six feeble emperors who were no more than puppets in the hands of the generals or ministers who had some of them assassinated when it served their purpose. In 1720 the Governor of the Deccan severed most of Southern India from the Empire. The governor of Oudh established his own dynasty there in 1732. There were risings of the Hindus. The Mahrattas occupied Malwa in 1743 and Orissa in 1751, and they extorted an imperial grant from Bengal.

There came invasions again from Central Asia. Nadir Shah, the Persian, took Delhi, subjecting it to a fifty-eight days' looting, massacring its inhabitants, and carrying off booty estimated at £32 millions. As an example of the gross exaggeration to which the Swarajists are addicted, and as showing their complete lack of the sense of proportion, one of the members of the Indian Legislature compared the British Government to Nadir Shah because it introduced a measure of which he did not approve!

The Afghans again swept down six times under Ahmad Shah Durani, plundering and slaughtering. They sacked Delhi and every other town and village that came in their way. The Tyrolese Jesuit, Tieffenthaler, then in India, says:

> They burned the houses together with their inmates, slaughtering others with sword and lance, haling off into captivity maidens and youths, men and women. In the temples they slaughtered the cows, the sacred animals of the Hindus, and smeared the images and the pavements with their blood.

The tale of horror increased until whole districts were laid waste and utterly depopulated.

By this time various European settlements had been established in India, the Portuguese at Goa in

1510, the Dutch on the Madras coast in 1652, the French at Surat in 1664, in Pondicherry in 1673, and in Chandranagore in 1688. The English East India Company bought a site in Madras in 1638, obtained Bombay from Portugal in 1661, and settled in Calcutta in 1686, where they purchased three villages in 1700.

The Portuguese distinguished themselves by a bigotry, cruelty and persecuting zeal that rivalled the Moslems. In fact, Shah Jehan was moved to retaliate, which he did by taking away from them their settlements on the Hugli, treating them as pirates and persecuting them as Christians. The Portuguese accomplished nothing, and were broken by the Dutch. The Dutch, in turn, were ousted by the British, and, during the wars between the French and the English in Southern India, the Mogul authority disappeared. The last nominal emperor, Mohammed Bahadur Shah, was exiled for his complicity in the Mutiny of 1857, to Rangoon, where he died in 1862.

The extension of the British power in India was inevitable if the country was to be pacified and an orderly government established. We had to put a stop to the state of anarchy which everywhere prevailed, and to the warfare between rival princes and would-be kings who were striving with each other for the mastery. We had to subdue Mohammedans in Bengal, in the Karnatic and in Mysore, and finally Hindus, Mahrattas and Sikhs. Thus the British Empire in India came into being whether we would or no. We spread the *Pax Britannica* over a country that had not known peace for a thousand years.

Are we to permit the return of such a state of affairs as has been described in the foregoing pages? This is what the Swarajists are working for, whether they realise it or not.

CHAPTER V

THE ADVENT OF THE ENGLISH

Why They Went to India—The East India Company—First English Settlements—Clive—The "Black Hole"—Warren Hastings—Wellesley—Lord W. Bentinck—Abolition of Suttee and Thuggee—The Sikhs—The Mutiny—Canning—The Empire.

ONE often hears it said that the English did not go to India for the benefit of the Indians. Of course not! They went to make money. But they have remained, inspired by other, and higher ideals. The Aryan Hindus did not invade India for the purpose of conferring blessings upon the aboriginal tribes, nor were the Mohammedans exactly philanthropists.

Trade was the magnet that drew the first English "merchant-adventurers," Messrs. Newberry, Fitch and Leedes, in 1583, to risk their lives in that far-off, unknown country. But they did not go armed, with a horde of cut-throats at their heels. Successful trade demands peace and an ordered state of things. They did not find these desirable conditions. They were seized and imprisoned by the Portuguese, but were afterwards released. Newberry was allowed to remain in Goa, where he set up as a shopkeeper. Leedes entered the service of Akbar, but Fitch travelled farther, visiting Ceylon, Siam and Malaya, finally returning to England.

Europe itself at that time was emerging from a long night of semi-barbarism. England was the first country to shake off the blight of a priestcraft worse, if possible, than that which cursed India. Europe, during the Middle Ages, had been devastated by wars, persecutions and massacres, quite as bad, in their crazy fanaticism, as those of the Moguls. Frederick the Great spoke truly when he said that all Europe was insane from the time of Constantine to the Reformation. The English Aryans, at the Reformation, had begun to grope their way to sanity, and were the leaders of the movement towards civilisation.

Although Spain and Portugal were before England as regards overseas enterprise, they accomplished nothing for the good of the world. They went forth, not to trade peaceably, but to plunder, and to force their religion down the throats of the "heathen" at the point of the sword, just as the Moslems did, and they claimed the same sanction. It was God who gave them the right to invade other people's territory, to lay it waste, to despoil and to slay. Its riches were theirs, by God's blessing, as the reward of religious zeal.

The English, it must be admitted, were more enlightened than this, prone though they were to sanctimony. The Protestant is, at least, half-way along the road to rationalism. Superstition and bigotry are wholly irrational; they breed fanaticism and cruelty, they lower a man to the sub-human. But even a modicum of reason leads to reflection, and raises him to an understanding of the common humanity to which we all belong, no matter what our colour, race or creed may be.

It is unlikely that any such considerations as these

were in the minds of the worthy merchants of London when they met, with the Lord Mayor in the chair, to discuss the formation of the first regular trading company for the purpose of developing commerce with India. But they certainly had no ideas of robbery and murder for the glory of God. All they thought of was business. Thus, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, on December 31, 1600, "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies" was incorporated by Royal Charter. Several other companies were formed, but eventually they amalgamated as "The United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies."

The first English settlements were on the Coromandel coast in 1610. A factory was established at Surat in 1615, with agencies at Gogra, Ahmadabad and Cambay. In 1638 a site was bought from the Raja of Chandragiri by Francis Day, at Chinipatam. Here he built Fort St. George, and thus became the founder of Madras, the first territorial possession of the Company in India. In 1661, the Island of Bombay was ceded to the British Crown by Portugal, as part of the dowry of Catharine of Braganza, wife of Charles II. King Charles sold it to the East India Company for an annual payment of £10! In Bengal, the factory at Hugli was established in 1640, and in 1645, a ship's surgeon, Gabriel Boughton, was granted the exclusive trading rights by the Emperor Shah Jehan in return for his professional services. Various agencies, or factories, were established by a Mr. Hodges, who was appointed agent and governor of the Company's affairs. But the position of the English traders was precarious.

In 1686, the Emperor's viceroy, Nawab Shaista

Khan, confiscated all their factories in Bengal. The merchants at Hugli, under Job Charnock, retired down the river to a village among the swamps called Sutanati, which formed the nucleus of what is now Calcutta, the second city in point of size in the British Empire. Job Charnock here laid the foundations of the original Fort William. He was a man of courage and determination, for when ordered to move he defied even the viceroy, and was besieged. Eventually the Emperor intervened, Charnock obtained a grant of the site, and thus became the founder of Calcutta. The Company then determined to establish some form of territorial sovereignty in order to withstand further aggressions. They issued the following memorandum to their representatives in India:

> The increase of our revenue is the subject of our care, as much as our trade; 'tis that must maintain our force when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade; 'tis that must make us a nation in India.

The Company appointed Sir John Child as Governor-General and Admiral, to maintain their position and possessions, with full powers to make peace or to declare war, as circumstances might determine.

On the death of Aurangzeb, the Mogul Empire began to break up. Not only did it resolve itself into unstable principalities, but there sprang up numerous small chiefs who sustained themselves in hill forts, raiding the countryside, until someone, possibly a neighbour with a stronger force at his command, was able to dislodge them. Against these the Company had to defend itself, either by diplomacy, bribery or force. This state of things in Southern India continued until war occurred

in Europe between England and France, in 1744. In 1746, the French took Madras. A young writer of the Company, employed in Madras, Robert Clive, sought refuge with others in the English settlement of Fort St. David, near Pondicherry. The Nawab of Arcot came to the assistance of the English, but was defeated.

Eventually the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, restored Madras to the English, but the struggle went on with the French in India, even though France and England were nominally at peace. The genius of Clive sustained the British cause, and he won fame by the capture of Arcot, and its subsequent defence, in 1751. Eventually the victory of Sir Eyre Coote at Wandewash, in 1760, and the taking of Pondicherry, ended the hostilities decisively in favour of the English.

During this period, Bengal, like other parts of India, was in a state of anarchy. Mahratta horsemen scoured the country, burning and pillaging, and traces of the famous defensive "Mahratta Ditch" may be seen in Calcutta to this day. One, Ali Vardi Khan, had usurped the position of Nawab, or Governor of Bengal. He died in 1756, and was succeeded by his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daula (Suraja Dowlah), a youth of 18 years. Siraj was in pursuit of one of his family who had offended him, and who was supposed to have taken refuge in Calcutta. Siraj marched upon Calcutta, and most of the English residents took refuge on ships down the river. A few remained, but were forced to surrender. They were all confined, 146 persons, in a guardroom, eighteen feet square, with only two small windows set high up in the wall. It was a stifling night in the hot weather, and in the morning only 23 of the prisoners were

carried out alive. Such was the famous "Black Hole of Calcutta." The site is marked by a marble slab, and in 1902 Lord Curzon dedicated a monument, erected in Calcutta, in memory of the victims.

I have heard Hindus deny that the outrage ever occurred; but then, as I have said, they are not good at history. For example, Mr. R. C. Dutt, C.I.E., dismisses it in a sentence: "Siraj-ud-Daula's prisoners died one summer night." It is argued that the Nawab gave no such order. That may be so. It might have been simply stupidity on the part of his officers, just as when, in 1921, some eighty Moplah prisoners were suffocated in railway vans, after they had been arrested for treating Hindus in the time-honoured way, namely, giving them the choice, "Islam or the sword."

The Nawab may, therefore, be allowed the benefit of the doubt. The atrocity was amply avenged at the battle of Plassey, when Siraj-ud-Daula, having sided with the French, was defeated. This engagement was fought about 70 miles from Calcutta. Clive was in command of 1,000 European and 2,000 Indian troops, with eight guns. Siraj's army consisted of 35,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry, and 50 guns. Clive delivered a surprise attack which threw the enemy into such a state of confusion that they fled in panic.

The battle of Plassey was fought on June 23, 1757, the date from which British rule in India may be said to have definitely begun. It marks the time when the two "ends" of the Aryan race, East and West, came together. If they can now find some common basis upon which they may agree to work peaceably and amicably, India may yet rise to the high position from which she fell after the break-up of the Maurya

Empire. . But her peoples must fully realise one undeniable fact. It is that, as *varna* (colour) is the test handed down from time immemorial, the Western branch of the Aryans is, for the time being, superior, even as its standard of civilisation is superior. Our Eastern relatives must fall into line, or go under, not necessarily before our armed force, but as a result of their own impotence. If we vacated India, some other Power, less tolerant than we, would take our place.

Siraj-ud-Daula having fled, Clive placed one Mir Jafar, upon the viceregal throne at Murshidabad, having first obtained a *firman* from the Mogul court as a precaution lest Siraj should turn up again. The East India Company demanded £2,697,750 as compensation for their losses. They might have obtained this sum had they resorted to such methods as the Mogul Emperors were wont to apply, but, in the end, they contented themselves with half. The new Nawab granted to the Company the *zemindari*, or landlords' rights over an area of 882 square miles around Calcutta. Later the Mogul Emperor agreed to transfer to the Company the district known as the Twenty-four Parganas as a perpetual property.

The Court of Directors now appointed Clive as the first Governor of all the Company's settlements in Bengal in 1758. There were new dangers threatening. On the north-west, the Shahzada, afterwards the Emperor Shah Alam, advanced into Bengal with an army composed of Afghans and Mahrattas, together with the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. When Clive appeared, such was the terror of his name that they scattered. The French were again proving troublesome in Madras ; they were engaged, and Masulipatam was taken from them. Clive next attacked and

defeated the Dutch. From 1760 to 1765, Clive was in England, and was created Baron Clive in 1762.

In 1761 it was found necessary to dethrone Mir Jafar, the puppet Nawab of Murshidabad, and his son-in-law, Mir Kasim, was appointed in his stead. In return, the Company received a grant of the districts of Bardwan, Minapur and Chittagong, estimated to yield a net revenue of £500,000. Mir Kasim proved to be an unwise selection. He became ambitious. He retired to Monghyr, a strong point on the Ganges, and there assembled an army which he drilled and equipped on European lines.

He began to interfere with the Company's officials and their trade. His men fired on an English boat, 2,000 of the Company's Indian troops were cut to pieces at Patna, and about 200 Englishmen were murdered in various parts of the Province. This, naturally, led to reprisals, and the Nawab was defeated. He fled to the Nawab Wazir of Oudh who refused to deliver him up. The Mogul Emperor, Shah Alam, took up the quarrel, and then a serious mutiny of the Indian troops in the Company's service broke out in the English camp. It was quelled by Major Munro, who ordered twenty-four of the ringleaders to be executed by being blown from the muzzles of guns. This was an old Mogul form of punishment that would have been better left to them, although shooting or hanging could not have been a swifter end. In 1764 Major Munro defeated the enemy at Baxar, and the Mogul Emperor sued for peace in person at the British camp.

The East India Company did not fail to profit by these events. Twice they sold the governorship of Bengal to a new Nawab. Oudh was given back to the Nawab Wazir on payment of £500,000, and the

Provinces of Allahabad and Kora were handed over to the Emperor, Shah Alam, in return for the fiscal administration of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and the territorial jurisdiction of the Northern Sircars, districts along the shores of the Bay of Bengal.

These doings have been denounced as high-handed. Doubtless they were; but who was not high-handed in those days when he had the power? The English were the stronger, and might was right, even as it is to-day in the last resort. But they never treated the vanquished princes, or the people, as did the Afghans half a century before. There were no wanton outrages, no massacres, no lootings and burnings of towns and villages, no laying waste of the countryside. The amounts the Company received were modest compared with the extortions of the Mogul Emperors. Concerning Clive himself, and other officials of the Company, many of their methods, and ways of raising money, were open to, and received, censure in England when they became known. But, at their worst, they did not involve such oppression as had been the rule throughout India under its own native rulers. In justice to Clive, it can be said, in the words of Mountstuart Elphinstone, that "in a life spent amid scenes of blood and suffering, he has never been accused of a single act of cruelty."

The Company itself was greedy to the point of rapacity. All its officers were tainted with corruption. They were miserably paid, but were permitted to add to their meagre salaries by private trade, and "gifts" which covered many doubtful proceedings. Clive, however, initiated and carried through reforms which tended to correct these abuses. He arranged a fair increase of pay, and prohibited employees of the

Company from engaging in private trade or receiving gifts.

Lord Clive returned to England in 1767 for the last time, and was succeeded by Warren Hastings. As Clive had laid the territorial foundations of the British Empire in India, so did Hastings create a British administration for that Empire. He re-organised the Indian service, reformed the revenue collections and established courts of justice. In 1774 he was appointed the first Governor-General of India, presiding over a Council nominated, like himself, under a Statute of Parliament known as the Regulating Act (1773). Despite his invaluable work in introducing a more stable form of administration, he is remembered more for what were described as his "crimes." Yet he was, in a measure, driven to them. The Court of Directors in London were insatiable in their demands for more, and yet more, money. He also had to protect the Company's territory from attacks from various directions. There were the Rohilla Afghans, who held a large area in the Provinces of Allahabad and Kora, cruelly oppressing the Hindus. They were suppressed, and Warren Hastings improved the finances of Bengal to the extent of a million a year.

More questionable was the plunder of Chait Singh, Raja of Benares, and the Queen-mother of Oudh. Chait Singh had enriched himself under British protection, but resisted the demand of Warren Hastings to subsidise a military force. He was also intriguing with enemies of the British. He was arrested, escaped, raised a rebellion, and was crushed. He was then deposed, and his nephew put in his place, subject to an increased tribute. The Begum of Oudh was charged with complicity and

heavily fined, over a million sterling being extorted from her.

For these, and other alleged acts of oppression, Warren Hastings was impeached by the House of Commons on his return to England in 1786. After a seven years' trial he was acquitted on all charges, but there can be no doubt that there was some justification for them. His only excuse was that he had to resort to Asiatic methods to meet Asiatic intrigue, which was poor enough. That he used his powers more mercifully than a Mogul viceroy would have done was no excuse at all.

There came a protracted war with the Mahrattas between 1778 and 1781, and with Mysore in 1780-1784, in both of which the English were victorious. The first arose over a question of disputed sovereignty, and the second was due to the hostility of Haider Ali of Mysore and the Nizam of the Deccan.

Warren Hastings retired in 1785, and, after a brief interregnum of twenty months under Sir John Macpherson, who carried on what the next Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, called "a system of the dirtiest jobbing," conditions began to improve.

A trading company passes from a corrupt administration of shopkeepers into a government only, it proceeds to the lordship of all India, it does away with the inhuman practices of its subjects and dependent princedoms.*

Lord Cornwallis was a nobleman, and not a "shopkeeper." Therefore he was capable of disinterested motives and actions, and of understanding them in others. He introduced many necessary administrative measures. Criminal jurisdiction was entrusted to Europeans; the Supreme Court of

* Edward Thompson, Ph.D., M.C.: *A History of India.* (Ernest Benn.)

Criminal Jurisdiction at Calcutta was established; and the functions of Collector and Judge were separated. The revenue settlement of Bengal was made permanent, with a view to placing the finances on a stable basis.

In 1784, Tipu Sahib, Sultan of Mysore, had concluded a treaty with the English, but, in spite of this, he invaded the protected State of Travancore in 1790. This led to the second Mysore war in which Tipu was defeated. He agreed, on terms of peace being dictated, to surrender half his dominions, and to pay three millions sterling towards the cost of the war. Thereafter he hated the English, and awaited an opportunity for revenge.

Sir John Shore followed Lord Cornwallis for five uneventful years, from 1793 to 1798, and was, in turn, succeeded by Lord Mornington, afterwards Marquis of Wellesley. It was Lord Wellesley's principle that the English must become the paramount power in India, and this guided his whole policy.

The history of India since his time has been but the gradual development of this policy, which received the finishing touches when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India on the 1st of January, 1877.*

The French in India now began to intrigue against the English. French regiments were in the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the army of Sindhia was officered by Frenchmen. Tipu Sultan was in correspondence with the French Republic, planted a "tree of liberty," and joined a republican club as "Citizen Tipu," much as some Indians correspond nowadays with the Russian Communists and call themselves "Comrades." There was enough conspiracy

* Sir W. W. Hunter.

going on to justify the strong action taken by Lord Wellesley. He saw that the time had arrived when the English must be supreme in India, or leave the country. There were four powers disputing for supremacy—the Mohammedan generals of the Mogul Empire which was now broken up; the Hindu Confederacy represented by the Mahrattas; the French; and the British, who were on the defensive. Had the first or the second prevailed, the country would have been flung back into all the horrors of civil war, and such conditions as were described in the last chapter. Had it been the third, it is certain that the "Swaraj" agitation would not have been allowed to develop into the nuisance that it is! But Lord Wellesley was determined to assert the claims of the British, for which our Indian fellow-subjects ought to be thankful.

The northern Mahrattas were threatening war. In Southern India the Nizam of Hyderabad needed protection, and, by extending this, Lord Wellesley gained a useful ally. The Nizam dispensed with his French battalions, and made a treaty not to take any Europeans into his service without the consent of the British. Tipu Sultan of Mysore was insolent and defiant, so Lord Wellesley decided to deal with him first. Tipu refused to come to terms, war was declared, and Tipu was driven into Seringapatam, where he died, fighting valiantly, during the taking of the town in 1799. Lord Wellesley treated the sons of Tipu Sahib with the greatest generosity. They were granted a liberal allowance and semi-royal establishments. The last of them, Prince Ghulam Mohamed, who died in 1877, was for many years a well-known and respected resident and Justice of the Peace in Calcutta.

Next came the Mahrattas, who were harrying their neighbours. Since they were impervious to all protests, their depredations had to be stopped by force. There followed the second Mahratta war in 1802. Sir Arthur Wellesley (afterwards the Duke of Wellington), brother of Lord Wellesley, won the decisive battles of Assaye and Argaum, and took Ahmednagar. General (afterwards Lord) Lake won the battles of Aligarh and Laswari, and occupied Delhi and Agra, and the Mahrattas were broken for a time. There remained only Jaswant Rao Holkar, a freebooter, raiding through Malwa and Rajputana, and he inflicted serious reverses on the forces sent against him. In the end, however, the British prevailed, and Lord Wellesley succeeded in carrying out almost the whole of his territorial scheme.

The Court of Directors of the East India Company, those "shopkeepers" in London, viewed these struggles with extreme disfavour. They did not want Empire—they wanted money; they did not care how India was governed, or whether it was in a state of anarchy or not, so long as dividends were forthcoming. Lord Wellesley was therefore recalled, and Lord Cornwallis was sent out a second time, in 1805, with orders to make peace at any price, although Holkar was still raiding, and Sindhia's attitude was threatening. Lord Cornwallis died soon after his arrival, and was succeeded by Sir George Barlow. Following the orders of his mercantile employers, he held his hand, abandoning the Rajput chiefs, who were our allies, to cruel retaliation from Holkar and Sindhia.

Owing to the feeble policy insisted upon by the Court of Directors, the situation soon became serious, and a mutiny of the Company's Indian troops at Vellore

in 1806 added to the sense of insecurity. But fortunately a stronger Governor-General was appointed the following year in Lord Minto, who, although Central India was disturbed, managed to keep to his orders of non-intervention, and to maintain peace by diplomatic methods. Lord Moira, better known as the Marquis of Hastings, replaced Lord Minto in 1814, and held the post of Governor-General for nine years. During his period of office, two wars occurred that could not be avoided. The Gurkhas of Nepal were raiding over their borders. When they came south into the plain of the Ganges they attacked British subjects. Then they had to be checked, and this led to hostilities which lasted until 1815, when General Ochterlony occupied their capital, Khatmandu, and a treaty was there drawn up, defining the limits of Nepal and its relations with the British. Since then the Gurkhas have been our firm friends and allies.

Meantime Central India was becoming more and more unsettled. Certain plundering bands, known as the Pindaris, composed of outlaws and "masterless men" from all India, Afghans, Mahrattas, Jats and others, began the old game of murder and pillage under three leaders, Amir Khan, Chitu and Karim. So powerful had they been allowed to become, as the result of the policy of non-intervention, that it required a regular campaign, with an army of 120,000 men to suppress them. On the outbreak of hostilities, Amir Khan agreed to disband his army on condition of being allowed possession of the Principality of Tank. The others were surrounded, cut to pieces, and their leaders killed.

In the same year (1817) the three Mahratta powers at Poona, Nagpur and Indore rose, were decisively

defeated, and peace was restored. A month later Holkar was crushed at the battle of Mehidpur. The dominions of the Mahratta Peshwa Baji Rao were annexed to the Bombay Presidency, and territory that had been held by the Pindaris became the nucleus of the present Central Provinces. At the same time Rajputana agreed to become feudatory under the British. But the proudest boast of Lord Hastings and Sir John Malcolm, who had assisted in bringing order out of chaos by peaceful persuasion, was "not that they had advanced the British frontier, but that they had conferred the blessings of peace and good government upon millions who had groaned under the extortions of the Mahrattas and the Pindaris."

Lord Amherst succeeded the Marquis of Hastings in 1823. In 1827 a disputed possession in the Jat State of Central India led to intervention by the British, and the capital, Bhartpur, was taken by storm.

During the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck (1828-1835) there were no wars, and only one acquisition of territory undertaken "in consideration of the unanimous will of the people" of Coorg, following upon the misrule of their Raja. Mysore came under British protection in 1830, but was restored as an Indian State in 1881. The period was essentially one of reform. The higher ideal of government, that of ruling the country with a sole regard for the benefit of its peoples, rather than the mere exploitation of its resources for the enrichment of the ruling class, may be said, with truth, to date from the time of Lord William Bentinck. Upon his statue in Calcutta are inscribed the following words, written by Lord Macaulay:

He abolished cruel rites; he effaced humiliating

distinctions; he gave liberty to the expression of public opinion; his constant study was to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the nations committed to his charge.

Lord William Bentinck favoured the admission of educated Indians to the service of the Company, a concession that the brahmins readily took advantage of, and in this he was supported both by the Court of Directors and the Government at Home. He reformed the finances of the Company, reduced expenditure, increased the land revenues by readjustment of assessment, and imposed a tax on opium. But the two measures by which he is chiefly remembered were the abolition of suttee and the suppression of the Thugs.

Suttee, I have already referred to in my first chapter. I said that a case occurred as late as 1913. But there was another in June 1928, on the banks of the Ganges, in the presence of a large crowd which shouted "Glory to Suttee!" and whose attitude was so threatening that the few police on the spot were powerless to interfere. The woman jumped into the river with her clothes alight, crawled out again, and was removed to hospital, where she died.

Lord William Bentinck's enactment was bitterly opposed, especially by the brahmin priests; a deputation of Bengalis waited upon him to protest, and a petition was sent to the Privy Council, with 800 signatures, praying for a restoration of the rite. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, reputed to be "an enlightened reformer," actually went to London and engaged lawyers to argue against what was described as an "interference with liberty of conscience." But the Privy Council rejected the petition, and the law prohibiting suttee came into force, in British India, in 1829.

The Thugs were a Hindu religious sect, worshippers of the goddess Kali, or Durga, as she is also called. Murder, with the Thugs, was a religious rite, in which the victim was sacrificed to Kali, whilst his possessions were appropriated by the murderers. The Thugs went about the country in gangs, carefully disguising their real identity, but posing as inoffensive pilgrims or traders. They would mark down their victim, either on the road, or in a wayside rest-house, and proceed to win his confidence. Finding out which way he was going, it was a coincidence that they were also travelling in the same direction. Members of the gang would then go out and mark down a secluded spot suitable for camp the next night, and where the body of the victim might easily be disposed of. Arrived there, and when all were settled amicably together, the unsuspecting victim was caught suddenly round the neck with a cord or cloth, from behind, and strangled. Each murder was preceded and followed by religious ceremonies, and was regarded as the sacrifice that the Black One most appreciated. It took six years to extirpate the Thugs. Of 2,000 who were arrested and tried, 1,500 were convicted and hanged or transported for 947 murders. Captain Sleeman, who undertook the active work of suppression, stated that this number of crimes "were not more than a hundredth part of the murders they have perpetrated."

But thuggee was not the only kind of sacrifice in honour of Kali. Sir William Lawrence says that, during his early days in India, a low-caste man was killed by a landlord "who had vowed to make such a sacrifice" if he were successful in establishing a new hamlet on some waste land,* and Sir Edgar Thurston

* *The India We Served.* (Cassell.)

relates that, in 1907, a petition was received by the district magistrate of Ganjam asking permission for the performance of a human sacrifice.* It was quite a common thing among the Hindus for barren women to kill children sacrificially and smear their bodies with the blood, in order to obtain the aid of Kali.

These practices illustrate an aspect of the Hindu character and religion that is little known, and less understood, here in England. And it is significant, as I have said before, that Kali is to-day the special deity and patroness of the Swarajists.

During Lord William Bentinck's administration the charter of the East India Company was renewed for twenty years, on condition that the Company should cease to trade, and that Europeans should be allowed to settle in the country. A legal member was added to the Governor-General's Council, not necessarily a servant of the Company; and a Commission was appointed to revise and codify the law. Lord Macaulay was the first president of the Law Commission.

Lord Metcalf held the office of Governor-General provisionally for one year after Lord William Bentinck. He passed a measure giving entire liberty to the Press, a concession that has since been scandalously abused by the Swarajists, and he was succeeded by Lord Auckland (1836-1842). Ill-advised interference with the internal affairs of Afghanistan led to serious disaster in 1841. Kabul was taken in 1842, but the British gained little satisfaction and less credit from that enterprise. Lord Auckland was superseded by

* *A Bird's Eye View*, by Lord Ronaldshay. (Constable.)

Lord Ellenborough, who proceeded to annex Sind in 1843. This seems to have been an act of aggression no more justifiable than that against Afghanistan. But the battle of Miani, in which 3,000 British troops defeated 12,000 Baluchis, was one of the most brilliant victories ever achieved in India.

For this, and trouble following a disputed succession at Gwalior, Lord Ellenborough was recalled, and was replaced by Lord Hardinge (1844-1848), during whose régime occurred a war of a different character. For a long time the attitude of the Sikhs, a religious and military sect which had grown to the proportions of a nation, had been threatening. The Sikhs, or "the liberated," were originally followers of Nanak Shah, a Hindu reformer, born in 1469. He was the first guru, or apostle, and his aim was to combine the Hindus and the Mohammedans into one brotherhood. Needless to say, he did not succeed! He accepted the reincarnation theory of the Hindus, and also the mission of Mohammed, but advocated the abolition of caste. Arjun Mal, the fifth guru, compiled the Adi Granth, the sacred book of the Sikhs, which teaches the worship of One God only, the rejection of superstition, strict morality, and that the true Sikh must be, before all things, a warrior. The Sikhs had been bitterly persecuted by the Mohammedans, and were almost exterminated by the successors of Aurangzeb; but, after the fall of the Mogul Empire, they grew both in numbers and in power. In 1845 they invaded British India with 60,000 men and 150 guns, and were defeated by Sir Hugh Gough in four successive battles, at Mukdi, Firozshahr, Aliwal and Sobraon. Peace was declared, and a treaty was signed limiting the size of the Sikh army, and the area between the Sutlej and the Ravi was annexed.

The Earl of Dalhousie followed Lord Hardinge in 1848. Soon after his arrival, the second Sikh war broke out, occasioned by the murder of two British officers, followed by a general rising. The Sikhs were again defeated, and the Punjab was annexed.

The security of British peace, and the personal influence of British officers, inaugurated a new era of prosperity which was felt to the farthest corners of the Province. It thus happened that, when the Mutiny broke out in 1857, the Punjab remained not only quiet, but loyal.*

During his eight years of office Lord Dalhousie introduced many reforms. He legitimised the re-marriage of Hindu widows, and took steps to prevent the recurrence of suttee. He opened the first railway, introduced the telegraph, and founded the Public Works Department. His attitude towards the Indian Feudatory States may be open to criticism, but his principle in government was that "rulers only exist for the good of the ruled."

Good faith must be kept with the princes on the throne and with their legitimate heirs. But no false sentiment should preserve dynasties which had forfeited our sympathies by generations of misrule, or prolong those which had no natural successor.

Thus several States were annexed, notably the territories which are now the Central Provinces. Oudh was taken over on account of the misrule and oppressions of the Nawabs who had assumed the dignity of kings. They had been repeatedly warned, and finally the then king, Wazid Ali, was deposed in 1856, and allotted a generous pension of £120,000 a year. In justification of this action, Lord Dalhousie

* Sir W. W. Hunter.

said that "the British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man if it were any longer to aid in sustaining by its countenance an administration fraught with suffering to millions."

Lord Canning assumed the Governor-Generalship in 1856, and at the farewell banquet in London he uttered these prophetic words.

"I wish for a peaceful term of office. But I cannot forget that in the sky of India, serene as it is, a small cloud may arise, no larger than a man's hand, but which, growing larger and larger, may at last threaten to burst and overwhelm us with its ruin."

There is a cloud over India to-day, much larger than a man's hand. If we disregard it until it bursts, none will be to blame save ourselves; it has been there long enough for all to see. This was not the case before the Mutiny. The storm broke then out of what appeared to be a clear sky.

It has been stated by some that the policy of Lord Dalhousie was one of the reasons why the Mutiny spread so widely, and that, otherwise, it might have been merely local and easily suppressed. There were, certainly, numerous dethroned princes, or their heirs, ready to take advantage of any disorder which might give them an opportunity. They were generously pensioned, instead of being killed off, as would have been the case under the Moguls. When the Mutiny broke out, they made use of the money paid to them by the British Government to buy arms and to enlist followers. But there were other, and more sinister, influences at work.

During the whole of the period which had intervened since the break-up of the Mogul Empire the brahmins had steadily increased their power. Under

the British rule they flourished exceedingly, and were allowed to fill positions such as would never have been permitted them by the Mogul Emperors. Their claims to caste pre-eminence and their prestige as priests were tacitly acknowledged; their religious practices were not interfered with, save as regards suttee and thuggee, and they were protected from the Mohammedans. In Bengal they were all-powerful, especially with the Hindu troops in the British service. They began to dream of India for the brahmins once again. They viewed the introduction of European ideas and methods, the railways and the telegraphs, as a plan to substitute an English for an Indian state of society. Not only that, but they realised, as they do to-day even more clearly, that the spread of Western civilisation, and the enlightenment that comes of it, means the dissolution of the caste system sooner or later; that it leads to their priestly pretensions being called in question; and that it will bring about a decline of the superstitions which constitute their main support. This is why they denounce our higher Aryan civilisation as "satanic."

The brahmins, therefore, proceeded to foment disaffection among the Indian troops, and they spread a rumour that the cartridges served out to the Bengal army were greased with animal fat. Cows' fat, involving the slaughter of these sacred beasts, would only have affected the Hindus, so they made it pigs' fat, which is unclean both to Hindus and Mohammedans. Those who know India are aware how rapidly a rumour flies in that country, and how widely it spreads, especially if pains are taken to disseminate it. Therefore the tale went the length and breadth of the land in a very short time before the authorities were aware of it.

The Mutiny began on Sunday, May 10, 1857, at Meerut, where the Indian troops broke out of barracks and murdered every European they met. Then they went off to Delhi, where the Mohammedans joined them, and they placed themselves under the deposed Mogul Emperor, Mohammed Bahadur Shah. The rebellion spread rapidly through the North-West Provinces, Oudh and Lower Bengal, and all Europeans, save the very few who managed to escape, were massacred. But the Sikhs stood by the British, as did the Mohammedan State of Hyderabad, and the Gurkhas of Nepal.

It is not necessary here to recount the subsequent events in detail; the massacre of Europeans by Nana Sahib at Cawnpore, the relief of Lucknow, the siege of Delhi, the reduction of Oudh and Central India, and the eventual restoration of the British power by January 1859. All these should be known to the proverbial schoolboy. Yet the lesson that the Indian Mutiny taught us seventy years ago seems to have been completely forgotten, for:

> At the present moment an agitation is proceeding in India which is entirely caused by, and restricted to brahmins and other high castes in sympathy with them, who even now have an immense and preponderating influence in the government of the country, but would fain be rid of the impartial supervision of British officers, who refuse to let them plant their heels upon the necks of the lower castes and classes.*

And it is allowed to continue unchecked, despite the ominous signs of what it is leading to.

The Mutiny definitely closed the régime of the East India Company, after 250 turbulent years, during

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* J. D. Rees, C.I.E.: *The Real India.* (Methuen.)

which it was occupied largely, and whether it would or no, with conquest and the shaping of an empire. Its charters were revised and renewed four times, in 1773, in 1784, in 1833, and in 1853, the powers of the Company being curtailed on each occasion. The Act for the Better Government of India (1858) finally transferred the administration from the Company to the Crown.

On November 1, 1858, a Grand Durbar was held at Allahabad, when Lord Canning read the Royal Proclamation* announcing that the Queen of England had assumed the government of India, but it was not until January 1, 1877, that Her Majesty Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India at a Durbar of unparalleled magnificence, held on the historic "ridge" overlooking the ancient Mogul capital of Delhi.

In 1872, His Majesty King Edward VII (then Prince of Wales) visited India, and was acclaimed by all classes as the Heir and Representative of the Empress.

In 1911, His Majesty King George V went to India and, as Emperor, held a Coronation Durbar, this being the first visit of a British Raj. It was the occasion of a wonderful display of loyalty. The capital of India was then officially proclaimed at Delhi, so long the centre of Mogul misrule.

The Aryans had, at last, definitely come together, those from the West joining hands with those in the East. India had presented to her, once again, the opportunity of establishing, with our help, a civilisation more splendid than that of the Maurya period. But the same influences which brought her down are still working against her and against us.

* See Appendix.

The principal measures designed to advance the progress and prosperity of India under successive Viceroys since Lord Canning have been, briefly, as follows:

Reforms for the finances in the direction of economy with a view to lightening taxation; the establishment and extension of the railways, of which there are now some 40,000 miles, with 6,000 miles to come; construction of roads and canals; irrigation; development of agriculture; measures for the prevention and relief of famine; establishment of new industries; delimitation of the frontiers and consolidation for their defence; extension of educational facilities; reconstruction of the Legislative Councils, introducing more popular representation; reform of the Army; reform of the Police; and many other reforms of a minor nature.

It is strange that, *pari passu* with all this, and the earnest desire of the British to advance the welfare of the country, and to encourage Indians to take up a larger share in its administration, the spirit of unrest should have increased. In 1908 it assumed an anarchical character in Bengal, the main centre and hot-bed of unrest and sedition. In 1912 an attempt was made to assassinate Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy; and another, recently, upon Lord Irwin.

Nevertheless, in 1918, a policy of more complete self-government was inaugurated, and steps were taken to employ more and more Indians in the various Government departments, with better conditions of service and pay. In 1919 Mr. Gandhi began his movement of "passive resistance." It was directed, theoretically, against the renewal of the powers with which the Government had provided itself during the Great War to deal with sedition.

This was a necessary step, since seditious speeches and writings were not only increasing in virulence against the British Government, but were also being directed against the Indian Princes from the safe refuge of the British Provinces. In reality, however, the Gandhi agitation is against *Western civilisation*, and is essentially reactionary in its nature and aims.

In 1921, the new Indian Legislative and Provincial Councils and the Chamber of Princes were established. At the same time Mr. Gandhi and his associates proceeded to demonstrate the fact that the more the British are disposed to give larger powers of self-government to Indians, the more irreconcilable they become. They continued their movement of non-co-operation and boycott of the Reforms. This led to serious disturbances which in some places had to be suppressed by aid of the military. Mr. Gandhi was arrested, sent to prison, and let out again, a foolish leniency which was not appreciated, as subsequent events have proved. As I write these lines (February 12, 1930) the news comes to hand that Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy (Socialist M.P. for Central Hull) has had a long conversation with Mr. Gandhi. The report states that the suggestion was made that the whole question of Congress co-operation in the round table conference on the Indian Constitution should be re-opened, on the understanding that the Congress should accept a preliminary period of divided control before the grant of complete Dominion status. To this, however, Mr. Gandhi would not agree.

CHAPTER VI

THE BRITISH PROVINCES

Area—Government—Diarchy—Government of India Act—Civil Service—The Personal Touch—The Real India—Village Communities—Land Revenue System—Most Lightly Taxed Country—Conquest of Famine—What Has Been Accomplished.

THE total area of India is 1,805,332 square miles, with a population of 318,942,480 according to the Census of 1921.

British India consists of the following fifteen Provinces (capitals in parentheses):

Province and Capital	Sq. Miles	Population
Ajmer-Merwara (Ajmer)	2,711	495,271
Andamans and Nicobars (Port Blair)	3,143	27,086
Assam (Shillong)	53,015	7,606,230
Baluchistan (Quetta)	54,228	420,648
Bengal (Calcutta)	76,843	46,695,536
Bihar and Orissa (Patna)	83,161	34,002,189
Bombay (Bombay)	123,621	19,348,219
Bombay	77,035	16,012,342
Sind	46,506	3,279,377
Aden	80	56,500
Burma (Rangoon)	233,707	13,212,192
Central Provinces and Berar (Nagpur)	99,876	13,912,760
Coorg (Merkara)	1,582	163,838
Delhi (Delhi)	557	488,188
Madras (Madras)	142,260	42,318,985
North-West Frontier Province (Peshawar)	13,419	2,251,340
Punjab (Lahore)	99,882	20,685,024
United Provinces (Allahabad)	106,295	45,375,787
Total Provinces	1,094,300	247,003,293

The remaining one-third of India, covering an area of 711,032 square miles, with a population of 71,939,187, is divided up into several hundred principalities of varying sizes. These are the Indian States to which I refer more fully in Chapter IX, merely remarking here that they will not allow the troubles which afflict British India to annoy them.

The King-Emperor appoints the Governor-General, the Governors of the nine major Provinces (Bengal, Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa, the Punjab, the Central Provinces, Assam and Burma), the Commander-in-Chief, the Members of the Executive Councils of the Governor-General and of Governors, and the Judges of the High Courts. The term of these appointments, except judgeships, is usually five years. Subject to the Secretary of State's direction, the supreme executive authority in India, in both civil and military affairs, is the Governor-General in Council. The Governor-General's Executive Council consists of seven members, including the Commander-in-Chief (three of whom must have served in India for ten years) as well as himself. Ordinarily the opinion of the majority prevails, but the Governor-General is empowered in special circumstances to over-rule the majority. In accordance with the Government of India Act, 1919, and rules thereunder, the Indian Legislature consists of the Governor-General and two Chambers, namely, the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly. The Indian Budget is submitted to both Chambers, and is voted on by the Legislative Assembly, except in regard to certain specified heads; but the Governor-General in Council can act, notwithstanding a refusal or reduction of grants, where essential to the discharge of his

responsibilities. Although the Government does not command a majority in the Indian Legislature, it is necessarily given the power to reject adverse votes, since its responsibility is not to the Indian Legislature, but to Parliament.

The Members of the Governor-General's Council fulfil the duties of Ministers of nine Departments, the functions of which are as follows :

The Finance Department deals with public, accounts, loans, taxation, opium, currency, banking mints, etc.

The Foreign and Political Department conducts relations with Foreign States, frontier tribes, relations with Indian States and Feudatories, and, through its Political Residents and Agents in the various Indian States, supervises their administration and regulates their relations with the Paramount Power.

The Home Department deals with the internal politics, Civil Service, judicial affairs, prisons, police, etc.

The Legislative Department, under the Legal Member of Council, takes charge of Government Bills.

The Department of Commerce deals with trade, shipping, ports, etc.

The Department of Industry and Labour deals with industries, stores, labour, public works, Post Office, telegraphs, civil aviation, communications, irrigation, factories, etc.

The Army Department, under the Commander-in-Chief, has charge of all military affairs.

The Education, Health and Lands Department has control of education, local government, sanitation, land revenue and surveys, agriculture, famine, meteorology, forests, foodstuffs, etc.

The Railway Department, under the Commercial Member of Council, controls the Railways.

In 1919 an Act was passed by the Imperial Government creating a new Constitution for India. This Act established a Legislative Assembly, and Legislative Councils for the Provinces.

The Legislative Assembly consists of 145 members, of whom 105 are elected. The extent to which this body is "representative of the people of India" may be realised from the fact that, out of the 247 millions of the inhabitants, only one million were registered as voters for the Assembly, and of these only 182,000 voted at the elections! Throughout all India the total of voters for all public bodies is no more than 7.4 millions. How the remainder are to be brought under registration is an insoluble problem which does not trouble the Swarajists so long as they can get into office. The elections for the Legislative Assembly and Provincial Councils are contested on a communal platform (Hindus *versus* Mohammedans). At the last elections, the Swarajists obtained a majority of seats over any other group in the Legislative Assembly, and in the Legislative Councils of Bengal, Madras, Bihar and Orissa, and the Central Provinces.

In connection with the Legislative Councils for the Provinces, the system described as "diarchy" was created. It means that certain subjects known as "transferred" are placed in the hands of Indian Ministers, the principal among them being local self-government, co-operation, public health and agriculture. Other subjects are "reserved" under the control of the Governor of the Province and his Executive Council.

In view of the demands of the Swarajists, the Preamble to the Government of India Act, 1919,

makes it perfectly clear what was intended. It runs as follows:

Whereas it is the declared policy of Parliament to provide for the increasing association of Indians in every branch of Indian administration, and for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the Empire: And whereas progress in giving effect to this policy can only be achieved by progressive stages, and it is expedient that substantial steps in this direction should now be taken:

And whereas the time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples: And whereas the action of Parliament in such matters must be guided by the co-operation received by those on whom new opportunities of service will be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility:

And whereas concurrently with the gradual development of self-governing institutions in the Provinces of India it is expedient to give to those Provinces in provincial matters the largest measure of independence of the Government of India which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities.

The late Mr. E. S. Montagu, then Secretary of State for India, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said:

"If you pass this Bill and modify it until it becomes a great Statute, I can say—we can say—as I should like to say with the authority of the House to the peoples of India: 'The future and the date upon which you will realise the future goal of self-government are with you. You are being given great responsibility to-day, and the opportunities of consultation and influence on other matters in which for the present we keep responsibility. You will find in Parliament every desire to help and to complete the task which this Bill attempts, if you devote yourselves to

use with wisdom, with self-restraint, with respect for minorities, the great opportunities with which Parliament is entrusting you.' "

The result has been the very opposite of what was hoped for and expected. Those Indians who succeeded in getting appointed to the Legislative Assemby and to the Legislative Councils have shown no sense whatsoever of responsibility, or wisdom, or self-control, nor any respect for minorities except themselves. They have sought to wreck everything that came in their way, and the result has been to create a perfectly impossible situation. If rational administration is to continue along the lines of such reform, and of such orderly and peaceful progress as was intended by Parliament, no time should be lost in repealing the Act of 1919; and these bodies, which have done nothing save exhibit their utter incapacity and ineptitude, must be abolished.

Viscount Goschen, lately Governor of Madras, speaking at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on January 20, 1930, pointed out that diarchy was only intended to be a transitional form of government, and he went on to say:

"Its purpose was to teach the people responsibility; its actual effect has been to teach them irresponsibility, and that has been one of the main causes of its failure. The present system has not only failed to satisfy Indian sentiment, but is rapidly becoming unworkable. Diarchy is not now practical politics."

The experiment of the "Reforms" has proved two things beyond question: first, the true nature of the demand behind Swaraj; and secondly, the utter unfitness for "Home Rule" of that element in British India which is demanding it.

If India is to advance towards a higher standard of civilisation; if it is to come into line with the rest of the civilised world; if a greater measure of prosperity is to be insured for its inarticulate millions—as against the few thousands who are opposed to progress—another system altogether must be devised. It must be a system of more direct, positive, and *personal rule by Britishers*, assisted by such Indians as are prepared to fall into line with modern ideas and modern methods. And the first step must be an increase in the personnel of the Indian Civil Service. At the present time there are only 1,200 Europeans engaged in the civil government, controlling, more or less directly, 247 millions of people. Excluding 864 civil charges held by members of the Indian Civil Service, and excluding all posts of minor importance held by Indians, there are 3,700 persons employed in the superior branches of the executive and judicial services, of whom only one hundred are Europeans. These Europeans, and their loyal Indian colleagues, who are carrying out invaluable work, often under the most thankless conditions, ought to be increased tenfold, with the assurance that, instead of being "let down" at the first breath of adverse criticism, they can count upon the support of their superiors. Selected Indians are now eligible for any of the offices formerly reserved for the Indian Civil Service, and it is justly said of them that "in the discharge of their functions, and more particularly their judicial functions, they have shown conspicuous ability."

The unit of administration throughout British India is the District, of which there are 273, averaging in size about three-fourths of Yorkshire. The head of the District is the District Officer, called Collector-Magistrate or Deputy-Commissioner, as the case may

be. He performs all duties connected with land and land revenue, and has general control and supervision over the officers of police, public works, forests, gaols, sanitation and education. He is responsible for the guidance of municipal and district boards, the preservation of the peace, and administration of the Famine Code in times of scarcity. There are also sub-district units under Indians who administer charges varying from 400 to 600 square miles. Below these are the village officers, headmen and so forth.

The Judicial Administration consists of the High Court, District and Sessions Courts, the Court of the District Magistrates; also Courts of District Munsifs and Subordinate Judges' Courts, which only try civil cases. The law administered consists mainly of the enactments of the Indian Legislative Councils (imperial and provincial), and of the bodies that preceded them; statutes of the British Parliament applicable to India; the Hindu and Mohammedan laws of inheritance and domestic law; the customary law affecting particular castes and tribes.

Such, in very brief outline, is the "framework" of government and administration in British India.

It will have been noted that the actual number of Europeans employed in the civil government is only about 1,200. It is far too small, for the reason that success in Indian administration is found in "the personal touch." In the older days, this was the secret of the trust and confidence established between Englishmen and Indians. Unfortunately, there is a tendency nowadays to consider it "bad form" to cultivate friendship with Indians. I know, because I have myself had a hint to this effect more than once; not only in respect of Indian friends, but Siamese, Chinese, Sinhalese and others. Thus I have met people

who have spent half their lives in the East who knew no more about the people they lived amongst than if they had never left England. Unfortunately, too, there has been a decline in the "quality" of many British who go out to India. As an Indian gentleman of the old school, who could recall the bygone years, expressed it: "There was a time when you sent us sahibs; now you send us coolies." In this connection I was told the story of an Englishwoman, incapable of speaking her own language correctly, who refused to enter the lift of one of the Calcutta hotels in company with "a lousy nigger." She expressed this objection, in those words, openly for all to hear. Incidentally, the "nigger" was an honours graduate of Oxford University and a scion of a very noble Indian house. I once witnessed a somewhat similar incident myself. Thus, such ill-feeling as exists between ourselves and our Aryan relatives in India is not caused wholly by the insolent tone and bearing of the Swarajists.

In the Indian States there is a closer approach of the people to their Maharaja which might be copied, with advantage, in the British Provinces. As it is, the Head of the District and his subordinates have too much departmental work, with its inevitable "red tape," on hand. The result is that what they know of the people, their needs and grievances, is only learned at second-hand through the "babus," that element of semi-anglicised Hindus—Bengalis more often than not—who are moving spirits in the agitation against the British.

It is true that Indian judges and magistrates are, as a rule, excellent lawyers, but here again comes in the curse of caste. How often does one hear it said that, if the magistrate belongs to a particular caste,

and one of the parties to the case is also of that caste, the decision is almost certain to be in his favour? Or, if a Hindu is brought up before a Mohammedan, or *vice versa*, things are likely to go badly with him? How often is the District Officer, who sends a man before an Indian magistrate, appealed to in the words: "For God's sake, sahib, do not send me before a black man"? Ask any Indian for whom he would rather work, a British or an Indian firm, and he will answer every time: "A British firm." This is evidence, in itself, of the manner in which the Britisher is regarded at bottom. It is realised that, as a rule, he tries to deal fairly, impartially, and, as far as may be, generously.

Furthermore, "the real India" is not the India that the average British Member of Parliament, or the "globe-trotter," sees during a brief visit in the cold weather, when most of his time is spent on the railway, in hotels or European clubs. It is not the India of the great cities (though many strange things may be found there if one knows where to look for them), nor of the health resorts in the hills. The real India is the India of the ryots, of the agriculturists and the peasantry, and of the forests and the jungles. Its population constitutes some 89 per cent. of the whole. The urban population numbers about 11 per cent. The real India knows little, and cares less, about what the insignificant minority of Home Rule advocates in the towns are saying or doing; unless these may succeed in working upon the fears of the countrymen, creating a feeling that the British Raj is losing its grip, or is likely to abdicate in favour of they know not what. Then, indeed, there might be trouble. For it must be remembered that the idea of democracy, or representative government, is wholly

foreign to Indian thought. The peoples of India have an ingrained belief, handed down for many centuries, in personal rule and a personal ruler, in autocracy, religious, aristocratic or military. It is, in fact, part of their very religion. Remove it, and there is nothing that can immediately take its place; anarchy is the alternative, and will follow as surely as we endeavour to graft upon these people a form of government that they do not understand, and for which they will not be ready for many generations.

This is the reason why the best Viceroy for India would be a member of the British Royal Family, a Prince elevated above all considerations of party politics. It is difficult for our people, here in England, to realise what Royalty means in the East. We love our King and his family, but we regard them as being "of ourselves," and akin to us. Far different is it in the East, where kingship is looked upon as something remote and semi-divine. Given a Prince-Viceroy, with the "human touch" which all our Princes possess, and India (even the Swarajists) would be with him.

All this, of course, may be very sad from the point of view of the Socialist Member for Seven Dials, but such are the facts whether we like them or not. After all, are we so sure that what we call "democracy" is so conspicuous a success among ourselves that we must needs foist it upon others whether they will or no?

It may be said that these people are illiterate and superstitious. True, but it does not follow that, because a man can neither read nor write and believes various absurd things, he is necessarily a fool in ordinary affairs of life. Is the ability to read and write a test for intelligence? What do our own people read?

Look at the nearest bookstall for the answer! The ryots are superstitious, so are our own country-folk, and not only these, but many others who might be expected to know better. Listen to any drawing-room conversation about spiritualism and the wonderful "gifts" of Madame Mystère of Bond Street, and then consider whether there is much to choose between these idiots and the ryots of India. I have met many men among "primitive peoples" who were far from being fools, and whose observations upon affairs as they affected themselves were wise and very much to the point.

One of the most important factors in Indian local administration is the Panchayet, or village council of five members. Those who have had to do with them are aware that they are not, as a rule, lacking in shrewdness, even though illiterate. It would be better if the Panchayets were more often consulted, and a greater weight attached to their opinions. Their views, could they be obtained and collated, would form a useful offset against the irresponsible and ignorant verbiage of the town-bred Swarajists who, as a rule, know next to nothing of the agricultural interests of their country which are the most important of all.

The land revenue system is a subject of much criticism, but the critics do not suggest any possible alternative. When they state, as I have heard on more than one occasion, that it is a British device to "exploit" India, they know they are saying what is grossly untrue. The system is an inheritance from time immemorial. Its principal is the tacit understanding that the Crown, or, as we say, the State, is the paramount landlord. It has been so, in India, from the reign of the first Chandragupta, more than

2,000 years ago, and the right of the Government to derive revenue from this source has never been called in question until recent years, and then only in respect of the British Raj. The system is maintained in the Indian States.

In most of Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, about one-fourth of Madras, and part of Assam, the land revenue has been permanently fixed; elsewhere generally the assessments, or settlements, are revised periodically, usually once in twenty or thirty years. The nature of the settlements varies in different provinces. In parts of Bengal and Bombay, the greater part of the United Provinces, the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province and the Central Provinces, the settlement is with large proprietors or proprietary village communities (*zemindari*), and the estate is assessed as a whole. Elsewhere (especially in Berar, Bombay and Sind, Assam and most of Madras) the *ryotwari* tenure prevails, and each ryot, or peasant proprietor, holds direct from the State. In temporarily settled *zemindari* districts the land revenue usually amounts to about 50 per cent. of the rental paid to the landlord by the cultivating tenant, whilst in temporarily settled *ryotwari* districts the revenue varies from 20 per cent. of the gross produce down to much smaller proportions, averaging about 8 per cent. Private improvements are exempt from assessment.

In the older days, as we have seen, it was the custom to take from the cultivator three-fourths of his produce, or even more. But the British Government has never demanded so much. Before the Mutiny it was laid down that it should be 50 per cent. The whole subject of assessment is extremely complicated and difficult, and thus can hardly be discussed unless

one has the necessary technical qualifications. But the salient facts which emerge from an inquiry into it are: that the revenues thus derived are what the country has always been accustomed to provide; that, under the British régime, they have never been excessive; and that they are spent mainly for the benefit of the country. In the older days, before the British, the land revenue was practically the only source of State income. To-day each rupee of revenue is made up as follows: Customs, 0.22; Land Revenue, 0.16; Railways, 0.16; Income Tax, 0.07; Excise, 0.09; Stamps, 0.06; Salt, 0.03; Irrigation, 0.03; Forests, 0.03; Interest, 0.03; Military Receipts, 0.02; Other Heads, 0.10.

The question of the land revenue has been, and is, under the serious consideration of the Indian Government, which is seeking ways and means of reducing the assessment. If new industries are developed sufficiently, if other sources of revenue can be tapped, the land tax will be lightened. But, in any case, the allegation that the British Government is "grinding the faces of the poor" is a grotesque and malignant falsehood. If a Swarajist government were substituted, it would probably resort to increased taxation for the benefit of its own members, their friends and dependents, and everything in the way of constructive and progressive administration would be allowed to go to pieces.

The public debt of India at the end of the financial year amounted to £327.5 millions in India, and £353.3 millions in England. Of this, over £600 millions is represented by valuable revenue-producing assets. The taxation per head of the population was not more than about seven shillings and sixpence, whereas, in this country it is over £15. It has been said, with

truth, that India is the most lightly taxed country in the world.

Dr. J. C. R. Ewing, an American, who was for some years Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University, quoted by Mr. De Witt Mackenzie, an American journalist, in his book, *The Awakening of India*, said:

> The British Government in India undoubtedly has its faults, but I know of no Government which is perfect. . . . I believe, however, that British rule in India has been a good thing. I believe, that, on the whole, affairs have been conducted unselfishly, and with the idea of doing everything possible for the advancement of India. Neither in taxation, nor in any other way, is the British Government oppressing the people of India. As a matter of fact, India is the lightest taxed nation in the world to-day, and the administration of equal justice for all has been one of the features which always has marked British rule here, at least so far as I have observed in my long study of the country.

It is complained that England "drains" India for the benefit of people in England. The expenditure in England chargeable to Indian revenue in 1927-28 was £24,097,000. The main items were: Interest on Ordinary Debt, £4,260,000; Interest on Railway Debt and Annuities, £8,657,000; Interest assumed in respect of British £5 per cent. War Loan, £890,000; Stores, £1,937,000, of which £1,608,000 was for Marine and Military Stores; Payments for British Forces, troop service, etc., £2,858,000; Army non-effective charges, £3,846,000; Civil Annuities, pensions, etc., £1,400,000; Furlough Payments, civil and military, £1,664,000; Home Administration (£343,000 less £114,000 contributed by H. M. Treasury); Aden contribution £250,000.

Of this, by far the greater amount was payment on account of capital and materials supplied from England.

The two amounts under the heading of Civil Annuities and Furlough Payments, amounting together to £3,064,000, usually come under the most vehement criticism from the Swarajists. But they are no more than would be paid to other public servants who have given their best services to the country that has employed them. It must be understood that the cost of living, and expenses generally, for any European in India, are higher than elsewhere; that saving to any extent out of salary is impossible; and that no Indian Civil Servant can hope to obtain employment in England on his retirement, or to take up any post in public life unless he has considerable private means. Objection on this point is illustrative of the mean, grudging spirit that inspires the opponents of British rule in India. The real reason for it is that they desire to enjoy these emoluments themselves.

It is alleged that the famines which have occurred under British rule were due to the impoverishment of the country as a result of extortionate taxation. This statement is, to put it bluntly, a lie; and those who make it are well aware that it is a lie. Famines in India are due to the failure of the monsoon rains, and when this occurs nothing can save the country from scarcity until the measures now being promoted by the Government are advanced much further. If the Swarajists have their way, these will be stopped altogether.

We have seen that in the old days before the British period there were famines of greater severity than have been known since, and that no steps were taken to save the people from the consequences. The situation to-day is that:

> The conquest of famine is the greatest achievement of British administration in India. The task has been a long and arduous one, and its results are, in themselves, an

enduring monument to the men who participated in its accomplishment.*

In the earlier days of British rule, following upon the previous protracted periods of warfare and misrule, famines occurred that we had no means of coping with, and there were none ready to our hand. But since the country has been at peace, effective measures have been devised. Between 1876 and 1903, twenty-six crores of rupees† were spent on famine relief.

In 1902-1903, the Government remitted two crores of rupees of land revenue which had accrued during the famine. In 1907 and 1908 there was a failure of the monsoon affecting an area of over 112,000 square miles and a population of 48,500,000. At the close of the relief operations, Sir John Hewitt, then Lieutenant-Governor, was able to say that "eleven deaths only, or about a quarter of the number reported due to this cause in London last year, could be attributed directly to want of food. There was no inclination to conceal deaths due to starvation, and the fact that so few deaths occurred is an eloquent testimony to the adequacy of the relief measures."

The active work of famine relief was carried out by both British and Indian officials with a total disregard of personal risk from the epidemic of cholera that broke out in the famine area, and in several cases they sacrificed their lives in their efforts to save others. Sir John Hewitt wrote:

Those on whose behalf the work was undertaken are reported on all sides to be most grateful to the Government for the help that has been given to them. The expression of this feeling has been probably more articulate than on previous occasions, and opinion is unanimous that they are not only grateful, but also contented. There is

* J. E. Woolacott: *India on Trial.* † A crore of rupees is £750,000.

every hope that the effects of the affliction through which they have passed will be only evanescent. The general verdict is that the trial through which the province has just passed has served to bring all classes into closer sympathy with each other and with the Government.

Then false evidence is deliberately manufactured by the malcontents in order to magnify the effects of the famines, and to make the outside world believe that nothing has been done to mitigate them! All the most miserable specimens of humanity that can be found in the poorest of the houses, the waifs and strays, the aged, the feeble and infirm, the crippled and the diseased, who would have been there in any case, are carefully selected and gathered together. Group photographs are taken and circulated in order to stir up ill-feeling, not only in India, but in other countries. What are we to think of the leniency of a Government that permits this sort of thing?

In order to increase the productivity of the country, and also as measures of precaution against future famines, great irrigation works have been carried out, resulting in a raising of the annual value of harvests to the extent of over £114 millions, the cost of the works being £75 millions. In the Punjab, the Canal Colonies extend over five million acres, yielding a produce of £20 millions a year. The Sutlej valley project is estimated to irrigate two million acres, and in the United Provinces the Sarda Canal scheme will irrigate over one and three-quarter million acres, costing £7 millions and estimated to yield 7 per cent. on the capital outlay. The Cauvery project in Madras will cost over £4 millions. In the Deccan there are in progress the Bhandardara Dam, the Lloyd Dam, and the Nira valley project, and, in Sind, the Sukkur barrage. During the year

1926-27, the total area irrigated in the British Provinces was 28.2 million acres. The total length of the main and branch canals, so far, is 67,000 miles. In addition to all this, the digging of wells is proceeding everywhere. In 1926-27, the Government bored 2,769 wells. It reminds one of the work of which the Emperor Asoka was so proud, though the British have done far more than he ever dreamed of. It is estimated that, when all the projected schemes are completed, the irrigated area in British India will be no less than forty million acres, unless Swaraj intervenes and puts a stop to it.

In the Central Provinces, the development of cotton, encouraged and assisted by the Government, has added crores of rupees to the profits of the cultivators. In the Punjab, 600,000 acres sown with cotton produced nearly £2 millions. In Madras, the introduction of cotton has yielded the cultivator £11 to £15 per acre, where only £3 or £4 had been obtained before. There has also been a greatly increased value in the yield of wheat.

British enterprise has also developed the tea, jute, coal and other industries, giving employment to thousands of landless workers who could not have found it in their own congested areas.

The work of the Agricultural Department has been of inestimable value. The results of its chemical, botanical and bacteriological research are placed freely at the disposal of the cultivator, together with demonstrations by means of cinema films and lectures. Hundreds of agricultural shows have been organised, and experimental trains fitted up for demonstration purposes. In 1903, Lord Curzon established the Agricultural Research Institute at Pusa, in Behar. Thus scientific work has improved cultivation in

every part of the country, better supplies of fodder are being insured, and steps are being taken to check cattle disease and the ravages of insect pests. Government farms are being established where the service of valuable bulls are available for the much needed improvement of the breed of cattle, and training is afforded in dairy farming.

Co-operative Credit Societies have been established, and there are now some 67,000 agricultural primary societies, with an aggregate capital of £18,000,000.

Western medical science has addressed itself to dealing with preventable diseases, the work in connexion with plague, malaria, hookworm and leprosy having already proved of enormous benefit.

The extension of the railways, of which there are now nearly 40,000 miles, with a further 6,000 to come, has added immensely to the prosperity of the country. They enable the agriculturist to attend markets which would otherwise be inaccessible, and to send his produce quickly and cheaply to the populous centres. By reason of the railways, also, famine cannot cause the appalling havoc that it did, since food can now be conveyed immediately to the stricken areas.

The revenue-producing assets created by the British Government for the benefit of India and its peoples amount, certainly, to not less than £600,000,000.

These are some of the ways in which the British are "oppressing" India. What have the Swarajists done to assist? Nothing at all. All these things are features of the "satanic" civilisation which they denounce and are out to destroy. Mr. Gandhi would abolish them all, and go back to the days of the bullock-cart. What has he to offer in exchange? Hand-spinning-wheels and home-made cloth!

It is a lie to say that the British are oppressing India. On the contrary, we have freed her from oppression. So far from taking away the liberties of her peoples, we have given them such freedom as they never knew before.

We have restored peace to a country racked and riven by constant internal war, when no man's life or property were safe; when the people, in their mud-walled villages, had no assurance that the morrow would not find their homes in flames and their corpses on the doorsteps. We have put an end to the exploits of marauders like Nadir Shah and the Pindari bandits, and the outrages of the Thugs. We have stopped the merciless tyranny of petty rulers. We have checked the devastating famines which depopulated whole districts, and we are doing all in our power to prevent the recurring epidemics of disease, such as the plague, that swept away millions of the people.

We are endeavouring to develop the country, to make the land more productive. We are helping the cultivators to improve their methods both as regards their crops and their cattle. We have established new industries, and have provided better means of communication by rail, road and canal.

In respect of the townsmen, we have provided opportunities for employment such as never existed before. We have given them educational facilities, always refused by the brahmins. We have established schools, colleges and universities, and thrown open those in England equally to our Indian fellow-subjects as to ourselves. They avail themselves of these advantages, and then they turn round and bite the very hand that is befriending them.

CHAPTER VII

OBSTACLES TO PROGRESS

Causes of Poverty—The Peasantry—Cultivation and Cattle—Moneylenders—Litigation—Hoarding—Gold Imports—"Drain to England" Myth—Causes of Poor Physique—Child-Marriage—Hindu-Mohammedan Antagonism—The Depressed Classes—Trade Union Report on India.

THAT India is not further advanced; that she still lags far behind the rest of the world as regards aptitude for self-government; that the mass of her people is deplorably ignorant, steeped in superstition and exceedingly poor, are matters of reproach levelled against the British.

Our captious critics, here at Home, as a rule know little or nothing about India; or they are the type of people who can think nothing good of their own country. In any case, it is not generally realised what a tremendous "dead weight" there is to lift, and the nature of the obstacles everywhere encountered is not known. The first of these is religion, or perhaps I ought to say superstition, since it is difficult to draw a dividing line between the two, especially in India.

In this country, religion is, speaking generally, more practical in its relation to purely secular affairs, or rather the two things stand in different categories. Our religion, too, differs entirely from Hinduism, the dominant religion of Hindustan. Christianity

is on an altogether higher level, and it does not necessarily stultify reason and commonsense. But even here in England we may meet people who can discuss, quite sanely, any secular matter one chooses to bring up; yet when a question of religion is introduced they become, to put it bluntly, drivelling imbeciles. Fortunately they do not, as a rule, allow their "cranks" to influence and control all their thought and actions in everyday life.

In India it is different. Religion, or superstition (which you will) colours everything. Religious tabus meet one at every turn, and unless this fact is clearly realised it is quite impossible even to begin to understand the Oriental mind. Chief among these is caste. It is said, with truth, that every Indian question is, at bottom, a caste question. As Sir John Strachey wrote, more than thirty years ago: "The people of India are intensely conservative, and wedded, to an extent impossible for Europeans to understand, to every ancient custom, and between these customs and their religion no line of distinction can be drawn." It is this which makes it difficult, and often impossible, to introduce new ideas and improved methods.

These observations have their bearing upon the poverty of the Indian peoples. India is, potentially and actually, the richest country in the world, yet its peoples are the poorest. Why is this? The Swarajist will say, "The British Government," which he blames for everything, even for the failure of the rains, the epidemics of plague and cholera, the devastation by floods, and the damage caused by locusts! But the true answer is to be found among the people themselves.

Going into the villages one is at once struck

by the primitive conditions under which the peasantry live, by the squalid nature of their domiciles, by the lack of even elementary ideas of hygiene and sanitation. The whole place is over-run by rats, to which the people seem absolutely indifferent. It is not surprising, therefore, that when plague does break out, it spreads like fire among dry reeds. For these are the black rats, carriers of the plague flea, and they cause enormous loss in the grain they consume. Much the same surroundings may be seen in the towns, where the efforts of the British authorities to enforce some observation of the elementary rules of health are denounced as "oppression." If one walks through the better parts of any of the large towns, say along Chowringhee, Calcutta, and adjacent streets, in the early hours of the morning, the rats may be seen scurrying about in hundreds, around and over the "sheeted dead" sleeping on the sidewalks and under porticoes; for the Indians sleep anywhere as the fancy takes them.

In the villages one may perhaps come across a modern farm implement or two, or hear a little engine working a small mill, but rarely. How the ryots achieve the results they do with the pointed stick called a plough is a mystery. I was told how a number of American ploughs, presenting no difficulty in use, were distributed among certain villages after demonstration and explanations as to the better results which would accrue. A year or two later the ploughs were discovered thrown aside, and the old implements once more in use. In the course of his evidence before the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India, in 1927, Mr. S. Higginbottom, Principal of the Agricultural Institute of Allahabad, said that, with the implements the ryot will persist

in using in preference to all others, "he is little better off than a man working with his bare hands."

There are many things which might be made to give an increase of income to the cultivator. Those half-starved fowls, for instance, scratching in the dust for a scanty livelihood, and laying eggs, now and then, about the size of marbles. They suggest the possibilities of poultry-breeding. But there are caste prejudices in the way. Why the growing of vegetables should be regarded as "low," and the *mali*, or market gardener, be looked down upon, is another of those innumerable minor problems of caste that is past understanding.

The destruction of crops by wild animals is a serious cause of loss. It is religion, again, that prevents, not only the reduction of these pests to reasonable numbers, but even interfering with their depredations. Particularly is this the case with that most mischievous of animals, the monkey.

There is one thing in which India might easily hold her own. It is sugar, which was imported to the value of over £12 millions last year (1928-29). But the succulent cane, grown so successfully in other countries, is a tempting morsel which many animals cannot resist. Efforts are being made to develop sericulture, but religious prejudice stands in the way.

In respect of cattle, we are confronted by other tabus. Cows are sacred animals and it is sacrilege to kill them. This, however, does not prevent them from being treated with great cruelty. Unwanted calves are not killed, they are starved to death, or thrown out to die, or tied to stakes and left without food or water. Old cows are driven away to be killed by wild animals or the village dogs. There are

in some places "cow asylums," subscribed to by pious Hindus, and here the lot of the unfortunate animals is even worse, for they are neglected and do not get the food which the funds are supposed to provide. Diseased cattle are allowed to wander where they will, and to infect the healthy. Rinderpest is a scourge with which the Government is trying to deal, but, once more, superstition steps in and prevents the utilisation of those methods which have proved so successful in Europe. The same influence causes the peasantry to refuse the opportunities offered them of improving the breed. It is estimated that there are more than 14,000,000 useless cattle that ought to be killed off, but are allowed to live, consuming fodder which is thus wasted.

When all this is pointed out to the ryot, his commonsense enables him to see it, so long as the conversation is in progress, for, as I have said, he is not a congenital fool. But, later on, the spectre of religious superstition rises up; if not of its own accord, the brahmin priest presently comes along to see that it does. Always, and everywhere, there is the priest in the background ready to apply the antidote to any new ideas that may have been implanted.

Here is the main obstacle to the education of the ryots, apart from their own deeply rooted prejudice against it. The brahmin priests are bitterly opposed to education in any shape or form so far as the lower castes are concerned. They know, well enough, that ignorance is the bulwark of superstition; it is by this means that they maintain their hold on the people. Once let the masses begin to question the existence of the gods—in which, incidentally, the brahmins do not believe—then their power will go,

and with it the reverence for caste as a religious institution. Next will arise the question whether the caste pretensions of the brahmins are well-founded; and inquiry into this will inevitably expose it for what it is—sheer imposture.

Another reason for the inefficiency of agriculture is the fragmentation of holdings. It means that, when a man dies, his land is divided up among his sons, and so on until the holdings become too small to support a family. In some cases the divisions are into fields a mile long and a few yards wide, and in others small pieces are detached and scattered about at considerable distances from each other.

Is it surprising that, under these conditions, agriculture becomes unprofitable? This brings us to another consideration, the indebtedness of the ryots. The British are accused of exploiting the Indians, but the truth is that they exploit each other far more vehemently and intensively than we could, even if we were to give our minds to it. After caste and priestcraft, the next curse that afflicts India is the moneylender. The bunya is to be found in every village, and, if all others are lean and starved, he will be fat and in good condition. The bunyas, or sowkars, originally came from Marwar in Rajputana. Marwar means "the land of death," and the Marwaris are certainly deadly to all who have dealings with them. But the bunya, in general, is not necessarily confined to this particular breed, there are nowadays many other species. These are the parasites who are bleeding India, the main cause of the impoverishment of the people; and this poverty, added to ignorance and superstition, makes a most formidable obstacle to any efforts to advance their welfare.

It is estimated that the total agricultural indebtedness to the moneylender is somewhere between £400 and £500 millions, on which enormous rates of interest are charged. Sixty per cent. upwards to 300 per cent. is not uncommon. In the Punjab the annual interest paid on the total agricultural debt to the moneylenders is at least three times the amount of the land revenue. It is estimated that the peasants pay three-fifths of their incomes to the moneylenders, and one-fifth in land revenue, leaving only one-fifth for themselves. It is much the same everywhere else.

The Government is, certainly, much to blame that it has not stepped in and put a definite stop to this iniquity. One of its effects is that the hereditary cultivating classes are being expropriated, the land is passing into the possession of the moneylenders, and the ryots are becoming their serfs. There is shaping an economic problem of the first magnitude, for the peasantry are being driven off the land to seek employment in the towns, and those who remain are reduced to a state of virtual slavery under the most merciless of taskmasters. It is complained that the village system is being destroyed. The British again, says the Swarajist. The real cause of the destruction is here.

It is true that the Usurious Loans Act of 1918 allows the courts wide powers when they consider that the terms of a loan are excessive; and there are the Agriculturists' Loan Act, the Land Improvement Act, and the Land Alienation Act. But it is admitted that these have done nothing to achieve their object. Of course not! What chance has a poor devil of a ryot before an Indian judge, with a bunya, possessed of limitless means of bribery, against him? None at all. I make this remark with due regard to what

I am saying, and those who know the mofussil courts will understand what I mean.

The Co-operative Societies Act of 1912 has facilitated the establishment of Village Credit Societies to replace the moneylender; in times of acute distress Government may make advances of *taccavi*, that is, loans to agriculturists, on generous terms; and there are official agricultural banks which advance money at a reasonable 5 per cent. But this is not enough; the Government ought either to put the bunya out of business altogether, or make it a penal offence to demand more than a specified rate of interest.

Apart from debt occasioned by failure of crops, damage by flood, uneconomic holdings and methods of working, there is the expenditure constantly incurred by marriages, funerals, and social and religious ceremonies of various kinds. It is nothing to a man that he may be in debt already to the extent of Rs.1,000 or so. He will spend another Rs. 1,000 more or less on marrying a son or a daughter, or on something demanded by his religion. This means borrowing again, until he may owe as much as 15 or 20 years' rental of his holding. Why does he do it? His *izzat* demands it. "Izzat" is a word constantly heard in India. It means self-respect. To do otherwise than is appointed by custom would cause him to "lose face," and so be looked down upon by the neighbours.

How the ryot is to be released from the spider-web of the bunya, short of what I have suggested, is a problem that seems almost insoluble. But it will have to be solved if the masses of the Indian peoples are ever to be lifted out of the abyss of debt and poverty into which they are fallen. The British are not responsible for it, but they themselves, and

their own fellow-countrymen are keeping them down, thrusting them deeper and deeper.

Litigation is another drain, and now that it is made so easy it is entered upon for the most trivial reasons. It adds to a man's importance in his village to have a case in the courts, which, incidentally, provides a welcome subject of conversation during the evening gossiping hours. I have said that India suffers from a plague of lawyers. These men will make a case out of anything or nothing at all, if there are any pickings in prospect. Here is an evil for which the British are certainly to blame. Most of the young Indians we see about London are law students. When they return home, the majority will be unable to earn a living by their profession. Then they will become politicians, Swarajist agitators, which most of them are, potentially, already. We have, indeed, largely created this nuisance ourselves. There ought to be a suspension of "lawyer making" for the next twenty years.

A further cause of Indian poverty is hoarding, strange as this may seem by contrast with what has gone before. India absorbs gold as a sponge absorbs water. This is why a gold currency is impossible in India—it would disappear. What becomes of it? It goes underground. The habit is, doubtless, an inheritance from the old days of robbery and rapine, and it is deeply ingrained in Indians of every class, from the raja to the ryot, from the brahmin to the *bhangi*. The hoard may run up to tens of millions sterling hidden in a rock-hewn fastness, or down to a few poor annas buried under a mud floor.

It will be remembered that, when Mahmud of Ghazni looted the fort-temple of Somnath, he carried off booty "more than any royal treasure contained

before." Occasionally a visitor may get a glimpse of the *tosha-khana*, or treasure-house, of one of the ruling princes, and of the heaps of diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls there displayed under the vigilant eyes of the unobtrusively armed custodians. But the real treasure-houses are ancient forts, like that of Somnath, in remote places, whose very existence is known to few, hardly even to their nominal owners. At Amber, it is said that the Raja, upon succession, is admitted *once only* to see the accumulated treasure of his house; he is taken blindfolded through the labyrinth that leads to it, and he never sees it again.

In 1889 one of the Indian States became bankrupt, its liabilities being greatly in excess of its visible assets. The British Government therefore decided to open up one of these forts, in face of the opposition of its priestly guardians, who pleaded religious privilege, for it is, of course, the priests who "sit upon" these hoards. There were discovered sacks upon sacks of gold and silver coins of rare antiquity, their value to collectors being far beyond their actual weight. There were sacks of precious stones which an English jeweller pronounced as being among the finest in the world. This action of the Government was denounced as sacrilege, and is still cited as an example of British "tyranny." How many of these hoards there may be, some altogether lost and forgotten, and what treasures the Hindu temples may conceal under their foundations, who can say? But their value has been "bled" out of the people. There is, undoubtedly, enough wealth thus hidden away, utterly useless even to its owners, to place India ahead of the world in anything she might choose to undertake.

One often hears a saying attributed to the late Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State for India, that "India must be bled," cited as an illustration of the temper and purpose of British rule. What it really does illustrate is the deliberate dishonesty of those who repeat it. What Lord Salisbury actually said was:

> So far as it is possible to change the Indian fiscal system, it is desirable that the cultivator should pay a smaller proportion of the whole national charge. It is not a thrifty policy to draw the mass of revenue from rural districts, where capital is scarce, sparing the towns where it is often redundant. As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested or sufficient, not to those which are already feeble from want of it.

The analogy is not a good one, since the proceeds of the "bleeding" are applied for India's benefit, but it is easy to see what was meant. To detach those four words from their context, and make them convey the very opposite of their true purport, is characteristic of the Swarajist agitator.

In a speech before the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, at New Delhi, on February 14, 1930, Mr. Birla, the President, complained of India's foreign debt, and said that her revenues were inadequate to the due discharge of her annual obligations. The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, replied that since 1900 the value of India's net imports of gold had amounted to £400 millions, and of silver to £350 millions. "It was surely unreasonable," he said, "to suggest that a country which had an enormous stock of gold and silver, and which was still drawing them in considerable quantities from the rest of the world, was so weak

as to be unable to meet her foreign liabilities." In 1924-25 alone there was imported into India gold to the value of over £55 millions and silver to the amount of over £15 millions.

The " drain " of wealth from India to this country is a pure myth. What England receives is returned in capital, in material and in service. The real drain is in India itself.

I have referred to the inefficient methods employed in cultivation. The same applies to all other industries. It is admitted that the Indians are wonderful craftsmen, workers in metal, ivory and wood, unsurpassed weavers, and they have all the provisions of nature in the way of raw material ready to their hands. But they cannot hope to compete with articles of foreign manufacture unless they adopt modern methods and scrap the archaic appliances handed down from a thousand years. Nor can they do it, even then, unless the efficiency of the labour unit, the individual employee, is considerably increased.

Wages in India are on a deplorably low level. But, as things are now, the average wage-workers are not worth more. They are mostly composed of the lowest stratum of agricultural labour, that is, the landless labourers. Owing to caste and custom, far more have to be employed in a factory than would be needed were they efficient. In Indian cotton mills there are usually four times the number of operatives to every loom or spindle than are required in Lancashire. Theoretically, the Indian textile mills have a sixty hour working week, but no single operative works more than six or eight hours a day when the intervals for prayers, gossiping, smoking and idling generally, are deducted. The same

observations apply equally to every other kind of manufacturing industry.

Another thing to be considered is the poor physique of the average Hindu. There are fine races in India, showing magnificent specimens of manhood, both Hindu and (particularly) Mohammedan; but the fact is that the great majority of the Hindus are far below the average standard. Malnutrition undoubtedly has much to do with it. But there are other causes upon which I need not dwell at any great length. They have to do with sex-precocity, and practices which are regarded elsewhere as perverse. Those who wish to go further into this question cannot do better than consult *Mother India*, by Katherine Mayo. The book tells the stark truth, and, fortunately, it is not by an English writer. But the wicked British were blamed just the same! That, of course, was to be expected from the Swarajists. They alleged that Miss Mayo had been subsidised (by the British Government) to produce the work in order to degrade India in the eyes of the world, and so to prejudice the case for self-government when the Statutory Inquiry ordered by Section 84-A of the Government of India Act came to be held.

But those who know anything about India are aware that Miss Mayo did not overstate the case. Here, in England, her book opened many eyes, but there are some people whose eyes nothing whatsoever can open. It is just this element, here in England, that constitutes the most exasperating obstacle to a sound and final settlement of the Indian question.

Child-marriage is a major cause of the degeneration of the Indo-Aryan stock. It was originated by the brahmin priests. More than 25,000,000 girls under the age of sixteen are married in India to-day.

Of this number, more than 218,000 are under the age of five years, and 2,000,000 under ten years of age. There are 15,139 widows below the age of five, and 396,556 widows under the age of fifteen. Such early marriage, with its various attendant evils, is even more inhuman than suttee. Except among the lowest castes, and the out-castes, no Hindu widow is permitted to marry again, and there are over twenty-six millions of such widows in India. To the unfortunate widow, often of tender years, is relegated all the drudgery of the household, and she is usually treated with such unkindness that burning alive would be preferable.

In some parts of India mass-marriages of girls take place, irrespective of age, under the direction of the priests. Even girls of three or four years are married on this mass-system. The only way of escape from the miseries of widowhood is prostitution, and thus we find the number of prostitutes of all classes and castes in the large towns to be incalculable. Prostitution is not regarded as particularly reprehensible or shameful in India. It is regularised, of course, under the ægis of religion; and there are women for every caste from the priests downward. In some of the temples there are women, dedicated to the deity, who are simply prostitutes.

A book discussing sexual vice in India, in all its bearings, would be a large one, but it is doubtful whether it would find a publisher. That obscene phallic symbol, the lingam, is the most popular object among the Hindus, even as Kali is the most popular deity. There are said to be some fifty millions of these beastly things in India. Women anoint them with ghee and garland them with flowers! The Swarajist may pretend to be civilised, but so long as

he upholds this sort of thing, as he usually does, he can no more claim to be so than the *bandar-log* can claim to be men.

How to deal with these evils? There is only one way, the expression of open contempt and condemnation; but this is now barred by the new section in Chapter XV of the Indian Penal Code, which was introduced as the result of a Hindu publishing a pamphlet about the Prophet Mohammed entitled *Rangila Rasul* ("The Gay Prophet") in 1927, and of another attack on the Prophet in a monthly journal called *Risala Vartman*. The clause of the Bill reads as follows:

> Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intentions of outraging the religious feelings of any class of His Majesty's subjects, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, insults or attempts to insult religion or religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with a fine, or with both.

The clause penalises even the mildest criticism of religion, for anything of an openly controversial nature may be interpreted as "an attempt to insult religion or religious beliefs."

Why it is possible to criticise, to condemn, or even to denounce, secular opinions and acts without being accused of "insult," whereas religious views and practices should require a special law to protect them, is one of those queer things which almost makes one question the sanity of mankind in general! A cynic once hazarded the opinion that this world is the lunatic asylum for the rest of the universe; and certainly it would seem so when one enters upon a study of the religious beliefs and practices peculiar to India.

In Chapter IV I explained why Hindu-Moslem antagonism is irreconcilable. There is a gulf fixed between these two religions which nothing can bridge. They cannot possibly find any common ground of agreement. As a leading Mohammedan, Sir Abdur Rahim, said in an address to the All-India Moslem League, at Aligarh in 1925: "A mighty spiritual spell separates the 230 millions of Hindus, not only from the 70 millions of Indian Moslems, but from the rest of humanity, while it divides the Hindus themselves internally into groups which know no social commerce with each other."

They are not merely sects, like the Protestants and the Roman Catholics, they are actually two different and distinct communities or peoples. The only attempt that has ever been made to divide humanity into *species* is Hindu caste. It has failed in practice, of course, but it has had the effect of marking off the Hindus from the rest of the human race, and, until they drop the caste system altogether, the Hindus cannot expect to be accepted on equal terms by the civilised world. As an Indian writer, Professor Narasu, truly says: "From whatever point of view we may look at the question of caste, it is something noxious."

Although the Mohammedans are much in the minority, they have no intention whatsoever of submitting to Hindu domination, which is what the Hindus are aiming at. The Mohammedans were always in a minority, but they do not forget that, even so, they ruled India in the old days, and there are some among them who look forward to ruling again should the British withdraw. The Swarajists demand "complete independence," by which they mean independence for Hindus only. Given that,

and the withdrawal of the British troops (which would follow as a matter of course), the Mohammedans would at once attempt the reconquest of India, and they would succeed. Even if the Indian States, the great majority of which are Hindu, were against them, the Mohammedans of India would obtain the active support of the Afghans and all the Mohammedan tribes from across the frontier. Swaraj, and the abdication of the British Raj, would be the signal for civil war from one end of the country to the other.

Even with the presence of British troops, and British controlled police, riots are constantly breaking out. The usual cause is "the great cow-music question," that is, the slaughter of cows by Moslems, and the playing of music by Hindus near Moslem mosques. The beating of a drum or the killing of a cow is quite sufficient "spark" to cause an explosion. Every religious festival or procession has to be guarded by police. The publication of an article or a paragraph which is interpreted as a slight by the other side, in a Hindu or a Moslem newspaper, may easily cause an outbreak; and a conversion from one religion to the other, usually given the fullest publicity, is almost certain to lead to trouble. The Hindus have three organisations which are continually giving provocation; the Suddhi, aiming at converting Moslems to Hinduism; the Sangathan, for training Hindus in self-defence when riots occur; and the Mahasabha, which covers all Hindu activities. On the other hand, the Mohammedans seek to convert Hindus, and they never miss an opportunity of expressing their detestation and contempt for the "idolators" and their practices.

In 1927 Lord Irwin pointed out that there had

been between 250 and 300 persons killed and over 2,500 injured in eighteen months as a result of Hindu-Mohammedan conflicts. Between April and September, 1927, there were no fewer than twenty-five riots when 103 were killed and 1,084 injured. Between September, 1927, and June, 1929, there were nineteen serious riots, and many more minor disturbances, affecting practically every Province. The most serious of these occurred at Lahore. Tension had been acute for some time, and the outbreak was precipitated by a chance collision between a Mohammedan and two Sikhs. The result was 27 killed and 272 injured before order was restored. Casual assassinations and assaults are everyday occurrences, and the number of murderous outrages, sometimes under circumstances of great barbarity, are extremely serious.

After the Lahore trouble the police instituted an inquiry. Two deputations, one Hindu and the other Mohammedan, waited upon the Deputy-Commissioner to complain that they distrusted the Mohammedan and the Hindu investigators appointed by the police to collect evidence. The Deputy-Commissioner's reply is worth considering. He said: "Before the Reforms, British officers available for such work numbered 120, now they are 68. You both want European officers, but we have not enough to satisfy your request." As Indianisation proceeds, there will be fewer still.

So menacing was the situation becoming that, on October 27, 1927, a Unity Conference was held in Calcutta, under the auspices of the All-India Congress Committee. The result was as might have been expected—complete failure to bring about anything remotely resembling Hindu-Moslem unity. It left the matter precisely where it was before.

It is alleged that the British proceed on the "divide and rule" principle, that we regard the Hindu-Mohammedan antagonism with satisfaction. I have even heard it said that the British authorities provoke disturbances. These statements belong to the already long list of Swarajist lies. It is notable that, when there is danger of an outbreak, the Swaraj babus are the first to howl for police and military protection. It might, indeed, be a salutary lesson were we to evacuate all Europeans and Anglo-Indians from the scene of the trouble, draw a cordon round, and let the belligerents fight it out. There would be no more rioting in that district for some time to come!

The Reforms, and the endeavour to graft British methods of representative administration, even locally, upon a country whose peoples are divided in this manner, have exacerbated the friction. They have caused the struggle to assume a new phase—a conflict for place and power and the emoluments which come of them. The Mohammedans, being in a minority, are naturally apprehensive lest the Hindus should carry all before them at the elections. Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum, a leading Mohammedan, expressed the issue bluntly as one of the division of "the loaves and the fishes," and Mr. Joshi, a leading Hindu, described it equally so, as "a fight for jobs." It is thus easy to foresee what will happen if Home Rule is granted to India.

The Hindu-Mohammedan difficulty is, to some extent, understood in England, but there is another which is not. It is the problem of the Depressed Classes, the Outcastes, the Untouchables. Their position is wholly the result of brahminical teaching, and so long as this continues "unmodernised," it will keep them there. Formerly, these people had

no rights, they were outlaw as well as out-caste. Many of them were actual slaves, and old deeds of sale have the clause, "You may sell them or kill them." To-day, chattel slavery is illegal in India, thanks to British law, but the Untouchables still labour under the most severe disabilities. There are upwards of fifty millions of them, and there are twenty-two castes classed as impure, as causing pollution by touch or by coming within sixty-four feet of a member of the higher castes. If they do, that person has to go through a purificatory ceremony, that is if anyone saw the incident; if not, it does not matter—"where there is no eye, there is no caste!"

The Untouchables are not allowed to use the public water supply, which is often a cause of great hardship. In the Madras Presidency the water is forbidden in nearly every village to low castes and out-castes, who number one-sixth of the population. The villages in which these poor people are made to herd apart are extremely congested, and are hot-beds of infectious disease. Many are cut off from access to the main village, except over fields by permission of the owners, who exact payment for the privilege.

It is significant of the hypocrisy of caste that *money* is the one thing exempt from contamination. The brahmin is not defiled by the acceptance of rupees or dirty paper notes which he knows have just passed out of the possession of a low caste man or an out-caste. In the towns things are not much better. Thus when the Bombay Corporation resolved that there should be no caste distinction as regards the use of the drinking water in the municipal schools, a largely attended public meeting passed a resolution condemning the Corporation's action as contrary to the teaching of the Hindu religion. The Bombay Stock

Exchange closed for the day as a gesture of protest!

If the Untouchables were lepers they could hardly be worse off. Refused admission to decent society, denied everything in the way of decent employment, is it surprising that they take to crime? They have done so to such an extent that they form what are known as "the criminal tribes," numbering some four and a half millions. Treated like vermin, is it surprising that some of them become less than human, like the loathsome *aghorias*—ghouls who feed on carrion, and on human flesh if they can get hold of a corpse?

The amazing thing is that these people, as a whole, venerate caste. If they became Mohammedans, they would at once attain social position, and come under another category altogether. Of late, under the influence of the education placed at their disposal, chiefly by Christian missions, encouraged by Government, some of the Untouchables have shown a disposition to assert their rights as human beings, and in Southern India riots have occurred owing to their attempting to use roads closed to them. There are Hindus, also, who, to their credit, feel a sense of shame at the manner in which they are treated. But the Hindu has to walk warily if he really is a reformer, and not a reactionary Swarajist.

Thus, there was a case where it was stated that a Hindu in a certain village had tried to assist the Depressed Classes. Among other things, they wanted a temple of their own, since they were barred out of all others, and he gave them materials wherewith to build it. Certain brahmins thereupon went to his house and called him out on some pretext or other; then they set upon and beat him to death. They

were, very properly, sentenced to transportation for life. This episode illustrates the temper of the brahmins, and explains why they hate the British who are endeavouring to raise the lower castes and the out-castes.

Theoretically, anyone possessing the necessary qualifications is eligible for employment in the Government service. But all such posts are closed to the Untouchables, and to certain of the lower castes, by the attitude of the higher castes. Under the Government of Bengal, members of three high castes, numbering about two and a half millions, or one-twenty-third of the total population, hold over 95 per cent. of the posts. One explanation is, of course, the vast illiteracy of the other castes. The caste that is educated in advance of all the rest is the brahmin.

For centuries the brahmins enjoyed practically a monopoly of education, and they denied it, as far as they could, to those beneath them, absolutely to the lowest castes. The vaisya, as a trader, had to be able to read, write and to keep accounts. The warrior-noble (kshatriya) had less need of such knowledge, but his pride would induce him to acquire it. As for the rest, they were deliberately kept in a state of ignorance, for, when Brahminism obtained the upper hand, the schools (of the Buddhists) were abolished, not to be re-established until the British came.

To-day we see the results in the statistics of illiteracy. According to the Census of 1921, there were, of males illiterate—142,623,691, and literate—19,841,438; of females, illiterate—150,807,889, and literate—2,782,213; the totals being 293,431,580 and 22,623,651 respectively. No records were obtainable

in respect of 2,887,249 persons, the reason being that they were inaccessible, living in wild, out-of-the-way places. The proportion of the population that is literate in the sense of being able to write or read a simple letter is 139 males, and 21 females, per 1,000. Contrast this with Buddhist Burma or Siam, where the great majority of the people can read and write their own language. Incidentally, the figures for Burma, with its thirteen millions of inhabitants, gives India a higher standard for literacy than it should have.

In 1928 the British Trade Union Congress issued a "Report on the Labour Conditions in India," by Messrs. A. A. Purcell (then Socialist M.P. for the Forest of Dean) and J. Hallsworth. These two gentlemen formed a Delegation sent out to India by the T.U. Congress in the cold weather of 1927-28. They were extremely energetic, covering upwards of 27,000 miles in less than four months, inspecting everything from textile mills and railways to irrigation works and printing offices, from tea gardens and villages to hospitals and lodging-houses; and they addressed meetings of workers, audiences up to 10,000 and 20,000, on every possible occasion. They must have moved with extraordinary rapidity, and the impressions they obtained would be as blurred as an accelerated cinematograph film. Who their guides, interpreters and friends were, they do not say, but we can easily guess. They would hear and see just what their English-speaking babu (Swarajist) mentors intended that they should, and obtain such information as these desired to impart, always, of course, to the detriment of the British. Their report is coloured accordingly. Commenting upon illiteracy, they say:

That such a state of affairs should exist in the twentieth century after one hundred and fifty years of British rule is a serious reflection upon everybody concerned. India for long has been regarded as a country specially suitable for economic exploitation, supported by costly militarism and police, and it is upon those who have instituted and maintained the system and richly benefited from its working that the responsibility for keeping nearly two hundred and ninety-four million of human beings in mental darkness and intellectual as well as material poverty must be placed.

The inference we are expected to draw is, of course, that it was the wicked British who instituted and are responsible for the continuance of this state of things; and that they alone have "richly benefited" from it. We are not given any inkling of the fact that literacy has been, and is, steadily increasing under the influence of the schools *established by the British*, both for girls and boys. The nature of the opposition to these schools is not mentioned. There is nothing said about the importation, *by the British*, of higher education, nor are we given the credit for establishing, or aiding the establishment, of fifteen universities, nor for the State educational institutions which now number 246,000 with over eleven million scholars. Certainly not.

Reading the report, one would suppose that the "capitalist class" consists of British only, who alone are engaged upon the "economic exploitation" of the country, and whose definite policy it is "to stabilise poverty on a permanent basis." There is nothing said about the immense amount of British capital that has been expended in India in the establishment of new industries, and in helping to produce the results described in my last chapter. The report goes on to give tables of wages "to enable British workers to understand their import," that is of certain figures

and statements preceding. True, the average wages paid to Indians are very low from the British working man's point of view, but the difference in the standard of living is not pointed out. Where a European engine-driver, for example, will be hard put to it to make ends meet on £12 (Rs.360) a month, the Indian driver with £3 (Rs.90) a month will be saving money, possibly with a view to setting up on his own account with a small shop, or even as a bunya. It is well known, of course, that conditions under British employers are infinitely better than under Indian, but this must not be admitted on any account!

The report has some pretty strong things to say about the "virtual slavery" on the Assam tea plantations. I do not know Assam, but I do know the Darjeeling District. If the conditions are similar, as my inquiries lead me to believe, then what we are told about Assam is simply not true. The animus of the report expresses itself in the following paragraph:

> We refrain from narrating the many other facts which we garnered, except the significant one that we witnessed a group of men, women and children working away together, while about five yards away was a planter's young assistant proudly hugging a whip. This we regarded as a good proof of the "contentment" prevailing among the tea garden population.

All I can say is that if the young man (who was probably riding round the gardens) had used that whip on the workers, he would shortly have found himself up in court, charged with assault, have been smartly fined by an Indian magistrate, and probably have got "the sack" into the bargain.

Messrs. Purcell and Hallsworth admit that they had "neither the time nor the particulars" at their

disposal which would have enabled them " to present a suitable or understandable rendering of a condition of things involving the maintenance of over 230 millions of human beings, with age-long customs, traditional rights and privileges, oppressions amounting in certain classes to slavery, caste privileges and disabilities, and wholesale moneylending practices which will bring many yet unborn into potential slavery." They need not have added this, the Report makes it perfectly obvious. But they certainly achieved their object, namely, to cast a slur upon their own country by conveying the impression that it is the British who are responsible for it all.

Such being the ineradicable view of the Labour Party as a whole, the future of India does not seem very bright; for should the British influence further decline, or be removed altogether, the country will simply relapse into conditions as they were before.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INDIAN STATES

Number — Area — Rulers' Powers — Administration — Treaty Arrangements—The Modern Prince—Conservative People —Progress—Personal Rule—Titles—Chamber of Princes —Demands—Indian States Committee—The Princes' Attitude—Consequences of Swaraj.

Most people in England imagine that the British govern the whole of India. They are not aware that two-fifths of the Peninsula lies outside British India, and is ruled by semi-independent princes, rajas and chiefs, who are very much masters within their own territories.

The Maharaja of Patiala, addressing a meeting in London, pointed out that it would be possible for an aeroplane to fly from Kashmir in the far north to Cape Comorin in the far south without crossing more than a few hundred miles of British India.

There are 662 Indian States, distinct from the British Provinces. They vary in size from an area of 84,000 square miles to one square mile, with populations from twelve millions down to 250, and revenues from £3 millions to £3. The larger States are Principalities with well-defined frontiers, but the smaller ones are scattered about, many of them being groups of villages, or mere parishes, within the British Provinces.

The principal States and State Agencies are:

States and Agencies.	Sq. Miles.	Population.
Assam State (Manipur)	8,456	384,016
Baluchistan States	80,410	378,877
Baroda State	8,127	2,126,522
Bengal States	5,434	896,962
Bihar and Orissa States	28,648	3,959,669
Bombay States	63,453	7,409,429
Central India Agency	51,531	5,997,023
Central Provinces States	31,176	2,066,900
Gwalior State	26,357	3,186,075
Hyderabad State	82,698	12,471,770
Kashmir State	84,258	3,320,518
Madras States	10,696	5,460,312
Mysore State	29,475	5,978,892
North-West Frontier Province, Agencies and Tribal Areas....	25,500	2,825,136
Punjab States	37,959	4,416,036
Rajputana Agency	128,987	9,844,384
Sikkim	2,818	81,721
United Provinces States	5,949	1,134,881
Total States and Agencies 711,032		71,939,187

Hyderabad and Kashmir are each as large as England and Scotland put together; Kalat is larger than England; and Marwar than Ireland; Mysore is nearly as large as Scotland; Gwalior, Bikanir, Jaisalmer and Jaipur are larger than, and Bahawalpur is equal in size to, Denmark; whilst Rewa, Mewar, Indore, Manipur, Baroda, Travancore and Cutch are all larger than Wales.

Thus when we speak of the Indian States we allude, not to small districts like our British counties, but to nations ruled by monarchs. Some of their rulers exercise full, or nearly full, sovereignty, with powers of life and death, whilst others are much restricted. But they are all privileged persons.

Except by order of the Viceroy, none may be arrested under British Indian law, nor can a decree be executed against their property, nor can they be sued in any British court. In London, in 1911, the plea of privilege was upheld in a case against a raja, and the court had no option but to refuse to proceed.

The administration of the States, with a few unimportant exceptions, is not under British control, but under that of their own princes and rajas, subject, in varying degrees, to the Imperial Government, and the laws of British India do not "run" there. They are advised by a British Resident, or by an Agent who may be appointed to a group of smaller States. Those to which a superior Resident is appointed are Hyderabad, Mysore, Baroda, Kashmir, Jaipur, Udaipur and Gwalior. Their rulers are bound by treaty to the British Crown, which guarantees them protection against internal rebellion or external aggression.

In accordance with the treaties they cannot wage war on their own account, or appoint ambassadors or consuls to foreign courts, nor are Europeans allowed to reside at their courts without special permission. In case of tyranny, oppression, misrule, or gross misconduct, the Imperial Government can suspend or dethrone a ruler, but this power has been exercised very infrequently. The larger States impose and collect their own taxes, and administer justice to the extent of capital punishment. They maintain their own civil administration and military forces, and they enact their own laws and carry out their own public works.

The number of troops which each State may maintain is specified and restricted. They are required to assist the British in any operations for the defence

of India, if called upon; to suppress internal disorder in any part of India; and to take part in State pageants if required. The following articles from the British Treaty with Mysore (1913) illustrate some of the conditions imposed in respect of these armed forces:

6. The Maharaja of Mysore shall not, without the previous assent of the Governor-General in Council, build any new fortresses or strongholds, or repair for military purposes the defences of any existing fortress or stronghold in the said territories.

7. The Maharaja of Mysore shall not, without the permission of the Governor-General in Council, import or permit to be imported into the said territories arms, ammunition, or military stores, and shall prohibit the manufacture of arms, ammunition and military stores throughout the said territories, or at any specified place therein, whenever required by the Governor-General in Council to do so.

9. The military force employed in the Mysore State for the maintenance of internal order and the Maharaja's personal dignity, and for other purposes approved by the Governor-General in Council, shall not exceed the strength which the Governor-General in Council may, from time to time, fix. The directions of the Governor-General in Council in respect to the enlistment, organisation, equipment and drill of troops shall at all times be complied with.

The purpose of these restrictions is perfectly understood on both sides. It is to prevent any Indian ruler from acquiring such strength as might endanger British India, or lead to aggression against any other ruler, and also to guard against alliances between two or more rulers for such purposes.

In some of the Indian States the rulers are bound by treaty to permit British garrisons to be stationed there, not as against the States themselves, but for strategic reasons, and to provide all facilities for transport and supply. There is, of course, no idea that any of the rajas are likely to contemplate war

with each other, or with the British, as matters stand now. They have always acted as our allies, and have been prepared to serve the Empire whenever and wherever the occasion has arisen. It was by the active alliance of these States that British rule became paramount in India, and it is by their steadfast loyalty that it continues. Their services are acknowledged in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858,* which assured them that all treaties would be scrupulously observed and enforced by us. Of recent years the Swaraj agitation in the British Provinces has aroused misgivings in the minds of the rulers of these States. For the Swarajists, in their speeches and writings, have referred to the princes in a manner calculated to convey the impression that they will, if they can, abrogate the treaties should the British Government be so weak or so foolish as to hand the British Provinces over to them. But the princes will certainly not permit their rights and privileges, as declared by the Proclamation, and confirmed by treaty, to be interfered with at the behest of a handful of Bengali lawyers.

The popular idea of an Indian prince is that he is a somewhat incredible "comic opera" kind of a potentate, who goes about arrayed in gorgeous silken raiment, wearing an astonishing assortment of jewellery of fabulous value on all occasions, surrounded by a harem of lovely damsels, and whose idea of amusement is to cause those who displease him to be trampled to death by wild elephants, or something equally unpleasant.

Nothing could be further from the facts. The Maharaja is usually a cultured and courteous gentleman, who dresses unobtrusively, usually in European

* See Appendix.

style, whose habits are often simple to the verge of austerity, and who would be averse from passing the death sentence on anyone. He has been educated either at home by European tutors, or in England at a Public School and University. He speaks perfect English, reads English newspapers and books, travels in Europe, and has the fullest information as to what is going on in the world, especially in English politics. He rules with the assistance of capable and carefully selected advisers, British or Indian, or both, and he endeavours to promote the welfare and prosperity of his people as far as the means at his disposal will allow. In the case of the larger States there are usually a State Council and a Legislative Assembly, and the judicial and magisterial services have been reformed on the British model with due regard to local custom.

Although tentative experiments are being made in the direction of elected representation, the princes are in no hurry to imitate Western "democracy." They are watching developments in this direction in British India, and what they see there, it must be admitted, is the reverse of encouraging. What may seem good to us here in England may prove the very opposite in the case of peoples whose course of evolution has proceeded on very different lines, and whose habits of thought are wholly dissimilar. Thus Rabindranath Tagore wrote:

> When we talk of Western nationality, we forget that the nations there do not have that physical repulsion, one for the other, that we have between different castes. The social habit of mind which impels us to make the life of our fellow-beings a burden to them where they differ from us, even in such a thing as their choice of food, is sure to persist in our political organisation. How, then, can

we think that our task is to build a political miracle of freedom upon that quicksand of political slavery?

To replace the "quicksand" by something more solid will need many years of education. In Patiala, Baroda and Travancore, a policy of free and compulsory education for all children has been adopted. In British India the opposition from the Indians themselves has been such that it has only been possible to advance this education to a limited extent.

The experiments which some of the princes are making as regards "popular" government would seem to be much more intelligent than are ours in the British Provinces. They know how conservative their peoples are, how tenaciously they cling to their old habits and ideas, and that generations must elapse before anything like democracy can come about, if it ever does. They also realise, and we must agree with them, that some features of Western civilisation would be better left in the West! If an example were needed of the disaster that may easily come of undue haste in this direction, it was illustrated by the fate that overtook Amanullah, the late Amir of Afghanistan.

The great majority of the Indian States are Hindu, though some of their rulers, like the Nizam of Hyderabad, are Mohammedan. Many of the princes, as regards liberal opinions and breadth of view, are far in advance of their peoples, their Ministers, and certainly the priests. The brahmin priests exercise tremendous influence, and are quite capable of inciting unrest, or even rebellion, as they are doing in the British Provinces. Moreover, apart from the supervision that is exercised by the British Resident, or Agent, their peoples, although intensely

loyal, have sometimes been driven too far. In this connexion there is an amusing story told of a small State, consisting of a few villages, the headman of one of which waited upon the British Agent with a key in his hand. He said that the people had deposed their raja, and had locked him up in his bedroom. Would the sahib please inform them what should be the next step in a properly conducted revolution?

The condition of the masses of the people in the Indian States is very much the same as in British India, and the bulk of the revenues is derived from the land in the same way. Famines have afflicted the Indian States quite as severely as the British Provinces, the cause being the same, namely, the failure of the monsoon rains. But not even the wildest of the Swarajists has, so far as I am aware, alleged that they were caused by the Governments of the States, though they actually do blame the Government in British India! The consequences have been just as disastrous, with this difference, that the measures of relief were not equal to those taken in British India; in some cases there were none at all. The people moved in large numbers across to the British Provinces in order to partake of the relief provided by the British Government. This is a sufficient reply, if any were needed, to the Swarajist lie that "nothing is done" in the Provinces to relieve the famine-stricken.

Although some of the States have developed extensive irrigation and drainage systems, water-works, etc., these are on nothing like the scale of British India. Mysore has erected a great barrage, creating a reservoir containing thirty-one thousand million cubic feet of water reserve at a cost of £400,000, and Baroda has spent a similar amount

on improving the water supply. Many rulers have established hospitals, dispensaries and asylums, with fully qualified medical men in charge, and equipped with modern appliances. Sanitation leaves much to be desired, as is the case everywhere in India unless enforced by British officials, whose "tyranny" and "oppression" is then denounced by the Swarajists. Indians, and, for that matter, Orientals generally, seem to be constitutionally incapable of understanding that insanitary conditions are the prime cause of disease, and that contact is the main reason for its spread.

I have said that the Indian understands and appreciates direct, personal rule, and here he gets it. The Raja is one of themselves, knowing their language and understanding their customs, manners and ways of thought. He is aware of all that is going on in the villages in a manner that few British officials are. The Maharana of Mewar (Udaipur), an important State of Rajputana, sits at a certain hour every day by a window opening upon a spacious court.

If anyone has a request or a complaint to make, or a grievance to express, he may do so in person direct to the Raja. The matter is gone into and settled then and there if possible. In the smaller States this method of government is usual, and the Raja is truly "the father of his people." Any of them may approach him with a petition or a complaint. If something like this custom could be imported into the administration of British India, our rule would be much more popular and successful, and the Swaraj tom-toms would beat in vain. But as things are, it is impossible. Indeed, if a British official cultivates too intimate an acquaintance with the people, he is looked at askance by his superiors.

Such zeal is by no means appreciated, whereas it ought to be encouraged.

Some of the States (Mysore, for example) are modern to such an extent that a bureaucratic form of administration has superseded personal surveillance, with results less favourable to all concerned. Others are old-fashioned and "orthodox," as in the case of Jaipur. When the Maharaja of Jaipur wished to visit England some years ago, the brahmins objected to his crossing the "Black Water" on caste grounds. So he chartered a steamer, and proceeded to make a miniature India of it. A layer of consecrated Indian earth was spread over the floor of the dining saloon and the kitchen. Special cows were taken on board to provide Indian milk, and, incidentally, dung for purifying (?) the saloon and other apartments; also a quantity of water from the holy river Ganges.

The titles of the princes, rajas and chiefs are extremely puzzling to the uninitiated European. Those of the Hindus are usually Maharaja, Raja, Rao, Rana and Thakur, their consorts being Maharani and Rani. To emphasise the greatness of some of them the word Adhiraja is added, making the title Maharajadhiraja. In some cases there are more than one title. Thus the Rao of Cutch is also Maharao and Maharajadhiraja; of Bundi, Maharao Raja; and of Jhalawar, Raj Rana. There are some exceptions, as the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Maharawal of Banswara, the Dewan of Palanpur, the Maharawat of Partabgarh, the Sar Desai of Savantvadi, and the Raj Sahib of Wakaner. The Moslem rulers are usually called Nawab, Khan or Mir, and their consorts Begum.

The son of a Hindu ruler is called Maharaj-Kumar,

or Raj-Kumar; and of a Moslem, Sahibzada. To distinguish the heir-apparent, the title is Yuvaraja among the Hindus, Waliahad among the Moslems, and Tikka among the Sikhs. In Travancore and Cochin, the title of the heir-apparent is Elaya Raja. In these two States the curious Marumakkatayam law is in force under which the throne is inherited, not by the Raja's son, but by his nephew or great-nephew. Bhopal was the only State in the Moslem world that was ruled by a woman succeeding by her own right. She was Her Highness Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., C.I. The line of women rulers ended with her, as she had no daughter, and she was succeeded by her son, the present Nawab. The only Indian ruler who has been converted to Christianity is the Seim of Nongkhlao, a very small State in Assam.

The people do not call their ruler by any such titles as have been enumerated. They usually refer to him as the Durbar Sahib, that is, the Lord of Audience, or they use his actual name, not out of undue familiarity, or from lack of respect, but the very reverse. The high title is not for common men to use. His rank raises him far above them, he is remote in one sense and near in another. He is a sacred personage, but much more approachable than the Governor of a British Province.

In this connexion it is worthy of note that we never hear of such troubles in the Indian States as afflict the British Provinces. The insults offered to British Governors and officials would not be tolerated there for a moment.

The peoples over whom the princes and rajas rule are many and various. The Rajputs and the Jats of the States of Rajputana in the Punjab, and of

Kashmir are of the old Aryan stock. The Aryo-Dravidians are found in Eastern, Central and Southern India; the origin of the Baluchis and the peoples of the North-West is Turko-Iranian. The Gurkhas of Nepal, the Gharwalis and the Sikkimese are of Mongolian extraction. In Bihar and Orissa are found admixtures of Aryan, Mongolian and Dravidian elements. There are the Bhils and the Gonds of Bihar and Orissa, Central India, the Central Provinces and the Bombay Presidency. Other races have contributed to producing mixed characteristics, as the Scythians and the Huns, and there are many primitive tribes dwelling in the jungles, forests, mountains and other remote places.

The influence of the British Resident at the courts of the larger States, and of the Agent appointed to a group of smaller ones, is considerable. Nominally, he acts as adviser, but he has powers of intervention under certain circumstances. In the older days the Residents and Agents were sometimes apt to be overbearing in their attitude towards the princes and rajas; thus, when King Edward VII visited India as Prince of Wales in 1872, he wrote to Queen Victoria:

> What struck me forcibly was the rude and rough manner with which the English Political Officers (as they are called who are in attendance on native chiefs) treat them. It is indeed much to be deplored, and the system is, I am sure, quite wrong.

Since then a check has been put to this kind of thing, and very properly so. The princes are now taken more closely into confidence of the Supreme Government, and their advice is sought on questions of importance. This is as it should be, for the

government and administration of the Indian States compare well, sometimes more than well, with those of the British Provinces.

In 1921 the Chamber of Princes was inaugurated by the Duke of Connaught. It consists of 120 members, with an elected Chancellor, and an elected standing committee of six members. The questions which come under its consideration are those affecting State rights, the relation of the States with each other and with the Central Government. Of late years the principal subjects which have engaged attention are the threat to their internal sovereignty that is felt in certain encroachments by the Government of India, and the possible consequences of an extension of a larger measure of "home rule" in British India.

Among the various demands put forward by the princes, the following were outlined by Sir Manubhai Mehta, formerly Prime Minister of Baroda and now of Bikanir:

The treaties of the East India Company should be interpreted in the light of modern conditions. It should be made clear that the princes owe allegiance to the British Crown, and not to the Government of India, which has sometimes shown a disposition to disregard the treaties.

The question of the railways running through the State territories is an important one. At present the strip of land on which the railway is laid comes under the sovereignty and police jurisdiction, not of that State, but of the Government of India. It is thus possible for "foreign" agitators from Bengal or elsewhere to go into the State and there make seditious speeches and distribute subversive literature.

This is a nuisance, and it has often happened in recent years. Unless the railway police choose to interfere, the State Government is powerless.

There are fiscal grievances. Customs and excise are controlled wholly by the Government of India, and are run entirely for the benefit of British India. It is suggested that a customs and fiscal union should be established, with a joint committee to adjust the matter more equitably. There are also questions relating to coinage, and to the postal and telegraphic services requiring adjustment, and minor matters which need not be here detailed.

The demands of the princes may be summarised under three heads:

1. A voice in deciding any policy affecting both the Indian States and British India.
2. Participation in the transaction of ordinary business between themselves and the Crown Agents.
3. The establishment of an impartial tribunal for arbitration in cases of dispute arising between themselves and the Imperial Government.

At the Conference of Princes held in Bombay in 1928, the following resolutions were passed unanimously:

"This meeting of rulers and representatives of State Governments (*a*) appreciates the wisdom of His Majesty's Government and of the Government of India in providing for an inquiry into the relations of the Indian States with the Paramount Power and with British India; (*b*) recognises that the readjustment of these relations so as to secure the political future of one-fifth of the human race calls for the highest statesmanship on the part of His Majesty's

Government and the people of India, and on the part of the Indian States; (*c*) declares its resolve to devote to the moral and material progress of the subjects of the States the advantages resulting from the equitable adjustment of fiscal and economic issues; (*d*) affirms the intention of the Indian States to join with His Majesty's Government and with the Government and people of British India in working for a solution which shall secure protection for all interests and progress for all India; (*e*) reaffirms the abiding determination of the rulers of Indian States, as recorded in the last session of the Chamber of Princes, to ensure the rule of law in their States and to promote the welfare and good government of their subjects; (*f*) emphasises the dependence of the progress and prosperity of British India and the States alike upon the creation of constitutional means for the adjustment of relations between them; (*g*) reaffirms on the one hand the loyalty of the Indian States to the Crown and their attachment to the Empire, and on the other hand their sympathy with the aspirations of British India which they regard as legitimate."

In 1927 a Special Committee was appointed by the Viceroy to examine the whole position of the relationship of the Indian States with the Paramount Power, their right to be consulted, and the redress of their grievances. The Committee's Report was published in March, 1929, its principal recommendations being, briefly, as follows:

On the economic side, the Committee recognised certain claims of the States to consideration in the matter of maritime Customs. The Government of British India has the right to impose such Customs, and the States themselves impose import and export

duties on their own borders to the extent of close upon £3,500,000 a year. It was agreed that the introduction of a protective policy and high Customs duties, without the agreement of the States, gave them a claim to a share in the resulting revenues. A *Zollverein*, combined with the abolition of internal Customs in the States themselves, was suggested as the ideal solution, but there were many States which would not give up their own import and export duties. Since British India would have to bear the cost of any concessions it was reasonable to suggest that the States should bear their full share of Imperial burdens.

It was suggested, therefore, that an expert body be appointed to work out a financial settlement between British India and individual States or groups of States. Such a body could deal with other financial grievances. So far as possible the States should be consulted in future in regard to policy affecting them financially before decisions were reached. But there was difficulty in the number of States, the absence of any combined policy among them, their slow methods of procedure, and the great distances which separated them from each other and from the Government of India.

On the constitutional side the committee came to several important conclusions. They found that the relationship between the princes and the Paramount Power was a relationship with the Crown; that the Crown had guaranteed the rights and privileges of the princes; that treaties, engagements and sanads, where they existed, were of continuing valid force, but had necessarily been supplemented by usage and sufferance, and the decisions of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, embodied in political practice, in order to meet changing conditions in a moving world.

The Committee described the working of paramountcy, but was unable to define it; but, nevertheless, paramountcy must remain paramount. Imperial necessity and new conditions might at any time raise unexpected situations. The relationship between the Paramount Power and the States, thanks to good feeling and compromise on both sides, had been in the main one of remarkable harmony for the common weal. The causes of intervention had been few. Of late the princes had been consulted freely, and this process should be developed. The codification of political practice and the appointment of committees of inquiry and arbitration recommended by the Montagu-Chelmsford Report should dispose of many grievances and differences satisfactorily.

The principal recommendations of the Committee were two. First, that the Viceroy, and not the Governor-General in Council as hitherto, should be the Agent of the Crown in dealing with the Indian States. The Council of the Governor-General consists of heads of departments responsible for British India without knowledge of, or sympathy with, the Indian States. Secondly, that the princes should not be transferred without their agreement to a relationship with a new Government responsible to an Indian Legislature.

The Maharaja of Patiala, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, was extremely outspoken in the course of an interview on September 25, 1929. He said:

"The attachment of the Indian Princes to the Crown of England is unshakeable. It has not only survived, it has been strengthened by every Imperial crisis from the Mutiny to the Great War, and after. It has its root both in the personal tie of loyal devotion,

which each of them cherishes towards the King-Emperor, and also in our profound conviction that the British connexion is vitally necessary to India.

"There is no desire on our part to add to the difficulties which beset the progress of British India towards self-government. Indeed, we wish nothing more than to live in harmony with British India, and to co-operate with its Government in promoting the progress of India as a whole. It is much to be regretted that the All-Parties Conference has not reciprocated our own attitude of friendliness and detachment, but has gone out of its way to settle our future without consulting us.

"The time has therefore come for us to make it clear that our political relations are with the British Crown, with whom our ancestors entered into engagements which we are proud to honour, and that we and our people will never submit to be governed by British India, over many parts of which our States in former days held sway.

"Our experience in the last few years has convinced us that the Government of India, as at present constituted, tends to become more and more the Government of British India, and less and less to remain a Power capable of striking an even balance between the claims of British India and the rights of the Indian States.

"That is why the great majority of the Indian States are appealing to Great Britain to rectify the present situation before it is too late, and to recognise in any future scheme for the governance of India that British India and the Indian States are two entirely different entities, between whom it is the responsibility of Britain to see fair play.

"We are endeavouring to devise a scheme which

will secure the participation of the States in All-India affairs, but will leave the States and British India alike free to pursue their own lines of development in domestic affairs."

This defines the attitude of the princes in a manner that leaves nothing to be desired in point of clarity. They understand better than do our politicians, or the British public, of what elements the "home rule" party in British India really consists. They realise that it is the weak indecision of the Imperial Government, reflected by the Government of India, which has led to the present crisis. They are prepared to stand by the British Crown and the Empire, but they will not submit to the dictation of a class of men in British India who have treated them with scant courtesy, and whom they despise.

On February 25, 1930, the Viceroy (Lord Irwin) opened the ninth session of the Chamber of Princes at New Delhi. In the course of his speech he referred to Governmental intervention in the affairs of individual States, and said that the rare occasions for intervention in the past decade had created a record in which all must feel a degree of pride. He expressed satisfaction at the invariable readiness with which ruling princes listened to any advice which he had felt it his duty as a friend to offer, and the generous manner in which it had been received.

At the conclusion of the Viceroy's speech the Maharaja of Patiala, the Chancellor of the Chamber, requested the Viceroy, the President of the Chamber, to convey to His Majesty the King an expression of the princes' unfaltering devotion to the Throne, and of their profound happiness and relief at His Majesty's complete restoration to health. No formal expression of the attachment and devotion of the

Indian princes to the King was needed. It was not a matter of mere convention. It was a spontaneous and living faith with them. They always regarded, and would continue to regard, the King-Emperor, and the treaty obligations with Great Britain, as the pivot of their common Empire.

After condemning "the recent and dastardly attempt" on the lives of their Excellencies the Viceroy and Lady Irwin, and congratulating them on their escape, the Maharaja said that a noteworthy event during the past year was the publication of the Indian States Committee's Report (referred to above), which the princes regarded as a mixture of good and bad. Grateful as they were to the Viceroy for the sympathetic statesmanship which granted their request for an inquiry into the relations existing between the States and British India, they could not refrain from remarking that the work of the Indian States Committee was neither as comprehensive nor as clear-cut as the importance of the task required. He was glad to say that the interests of the Indian States were very well looked after in England, where their reputation stood firm.

It is true that the reputation of the Indian States stands very firm with those in England who know anything about them. Unfortunately, the British public knows little, and the same remark applies to the average Member of Parliament. What should be definitely understood is that the princes look to England as the Paramount Power to which alone they owe allegiance; not to British India, where the determined policy of the Home Government seems to be the turning over of the ruling power to the Swarajists. If this is persisted in, it must result in bringing the princes into serious conflict with British India and

ultimately with the Imperial Government. Such a situation could not fail to be disastrous both to this country and to India.

A government of India that is definitely British is tolerable, if occasionally apt to be vexatious in some of its dealings with the Indian States. It is, at any rate, usually open to unprejudiced consideration and discussion of the questions at issue, and it is quite incorruptible.

But if that Government should be elected as, say, the Corporation of Calcutta is elected, and consist mainly of Bengali lawyers and their like, what then? The Indian politicians, in their Press and in their speeches, have indicated the possibility of a policy prejudicial to the interests of the Indian States, which these certainly would not tolerate. The princes have been, and are, loyal to the British Crown, and they have proved their loyalty by the manner in which they came to the defence of England and the Empire during the Great War. They wish well to our experiments in the British Provinces, but they have no intention of allowing any encroachments on their rights as defined by treaty. Are we to risk alienating the States in order to placate a handful of "half-baked" politicians who would not know what to do with governmental power if they had it? If the Imperial Government, here in England, adopts a policy other than that to which the treaties bind it, then the Indian States may reconsider their attitude. If this should come about, as it easily may with the granting of "home rule" to British India, the Indian Empire will be lost.

The Swaraj demand, as now expressed, is not home rule within the Empire, but complete independence. That, of course, would mean the withdrawal of all

British troops from India. What would happen then is best expressed in the words of Sir Umar Hyat Khan, in the course of a speech in the Council of State. He said: "The Punjab would take as large a portion of the country as is near it; Nepal would take another part, and the ruling chiefs would take all the territory round them, and so on, until perhaps our friends from the Frontier would come down upon us and sweep us, or perhaps another Eastern nation might attack our seaports."

What would be the fate of the voluble semi-anglicised babus, the non-co-operators, the lawyer politicians, and the noisy student element, of which the Swaraj movement is composed? The answer was given in the oft-quoted reply of one of the Rajput princes to the question: "Maharaja Sahib, what would happen if the British left India to-morrow?" "If you left India to-morrow, sir, on the day *after* to-morrow my men would be on horseback, and a month after that there would not be a rupee or a virgin left in all Bengal."

That was no idle or jocular remark, but a serious statement of what actually would happen. Not only this, but the Mohammedans would undoubtedly endeavour to recover their ancient ascendancy over the Hindus, and anarchy and chaos would reign throughout India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. This is what the "peaceful" non-co-operation of Mr. Gandhi is leading to, and the end for which the Swarajists are actively working, whether they realise it or not.

CHAPTER IX

A STUDY IN INCOMPETENCE

A Well-intentioned Blunder—The Assembly and the Councils—What Do They Represent?—Policy of Obstruction—Impossible Demands—The Simon Commission—Monkey Mentality—Boycott of British Trade—Expropriation Threats—Corruption—Nepotism—Flight of Capital—A Ludicrous Situation.

THE Montagu-Chelmsford Report, together with the Government of India Act of 1919, will go down to posterity as one of the greatest blunders in the history of British India.

It was well-intentioned, but good intentions often lead to unfortunate, and sometimes calamitous, results. Yet it might have been supposed that Lord Chelmsford, if not the late Mr. E. S. Montagu, would have had some idea of the possible results of granting larger powers of self-government, in view of what had occurred in previous years, and was, even then, going on.

Probably it was thought that these new concessions would placate the element which was clamouring for a larger measure of governmental control. It may have been imagined that, having something else to occupy their minds, they would cease to be active in less desirable ways. But, as an experiment in representative government, the Reforms have proved a manifest failure. There is no popular representation at all.

Of the 145 members of the Legislative Assembly, 105 are elected and 40 are nominated. These 105 are "representative" of the following Provinces, the populations of which are given in parentheses: 16 for Madras (42,318,985); 16 for Bombay (38,639,938); 17 for Bengal (46,695,536); 16 for the United Provinces (45,375,787); 12 for the Punjab (20,685,024); 12 for Bihar and Orissa (34,002,189); 6 for the Central Provinces and Berar (13,912,760); 4 for Assam (7,606,230); 4 for Burma* (13,212,192); 1 for Delhi (488,188); and 1 for Ajmer Merwara (495,271).

The total electorate which sent those members to the Legislative Assembly was only 950,979, but a large majority did not record their votes!

As regards the Provincial Councils, the "representatives" are as follows, the figures indicating, first, the elected members, second (in parentheses) the nominated members, and third, the totals: Madras, 98 (34) 132; Bombay, 86 (28) 114; Bengal, 114 (26) 140; United Provinces, 100 (23) 123; Punjab, 71 (23) 94; Bihar and Orissa, 76 (27) 103; Central Provinces and Berar, 38 (35) 73; Assam, 39 (14) 53; Burma 79 (24) 103; Coorg, 15 (5) 20.

The total electorate for the Provinces (excluding Burma), with a population of over 250 millions, was 5,810,345 in 1923-24, and of these only a fraction recorded their votes!

For the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils to claim to be "the voice of India" is so

* Although Burma is included, it does not enter into our present discussion. It is interesting to note, however, that one of the demands of the Burmese is that they shall have their own Government, apart from India, to which, they contend, they do not belong. Burma is the only Province that can be regarded as capable of self-government at the present time. Being a Buddhist country, it does not present the same problems as India; there is no caste, and there is a high standard of literacy. The people are of a different character altogether from those of India.

comical that one's indignation is checked by laughter. They do not even speak for the Provinces. How were they elected? How did they obtain such votes as were cast? There is no need to ask these questions of anyone who knows India. What do they represent? No more than their own caste, family or personal interests. The majority of their "constituents" do not know their names, and the vast mass of the peoples in the Provinces have never even heard of them. Yet these are the men who have the impudence to try and "hold up" the Government of India until they are given a free hand to rule the country!

This is the first lesson in "responsible" government as it is understood in British India.

The whole thing, of course, is an experiment, and it has failed. It was the fulfilment of promises made long ago, and each step forward has been accompanied by events which forecast what the end would be. In 1907 Viscount Morley spoke in favour of prospective reforms of a popular character. This was immediately followed by outbreaks of disorder in Bengal. Shortly after, so soon, in fact, that it looked like an effort at placation, further promises of self-government were made. Then the publication of seditious literature became such a nuisance that it was found necessary to pass a Press Act to control the Indian newspapers and printing offices. Things became steadily worse until, under the Governor-Generalship of Lord Chelmsford, the agitation assumed a most extreme character, with demands for "home rule" and the separation of India from Great Britain. Indeed, some time earlier, a Swarajist journal, bearing the ominous title of *Bande Mataram*, had declared that the final aim was to rid India absolutely of British control.

One might have supposed that this trend of events would have warned the optimistic framers of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, and the supporters of the Act, but it certainly did not. The Act was passed, and then the "fun" began; the Swarajists lost no time in showing their quality. The new Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils had no sooner been inaugurated (1921) and their members appointed, than they began to exhibit that complete lack of responsibility which has characterised them ever since. They had been in office about nine months when they called upon the world to notice what efficient administrators they were, and to say that they were capable of taking sole charge of the Indian Empire. They demanded increased powers immediately, and they pointed to China (!) as an example of the competence of an Asiatic country to govern itself. The only comment one can make on this is that they would undoubtedly reproduce the conditions of China if given a free hand.

But the Government of India Act provided that ten years should elapse, and then a Royal Commission would be appointed "for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of government, the growth of education, and the development of representative institutions in British India, and matters connected therewith, and the Commission shall report as to whether, and to what extent, it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of Second Chambers of the local legislatures is, or is not, desirable."

The Government of India, however, accepted the

following resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly:

> This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General in Council "that he should convey to the Secretary of State for India the view of this Assembly that the progress made by India on the path of representative government warrants a re-examination and revision of the Constitution at an earlier date than 1929."

What the Swarajists did when the Home Government agreed, and sent out a Commission, put the final stamp of utter irresponsibility upon them.

When the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils settled down, it was not to engage on constructive work even in furthering their own aims, not to mention reforms for the benefit of the country, but to hamper and obstruct administration in every way. The Act fortunately gives the Governor-General, and the Governors of the Provinces, power to over-ride the Assembly and the Councils should they prove impossible. Thus, in 1923, the Governor-General was compelled to "certify" the Budget after it had been rejected, for no valid reasons, by the Legislative Assembly.

The preamble of the Act of 1919 made it clear that, by granting extended powers, confidence was reposed in the Indian Representatives' sense of responsibility; and, at the same time, should confidence prove to have been misplaced, the powers already given might be curtailed. The Swarajists' way of showing a sense of responsibility, and of proving their fitness to rule India, has been to "block" every effort at administration. The obvious reply is, of course, to abolish the Assembly and the Councils, and to return to the former, well-tried, and admittedly efficient methods.

India as a whole would not care, for India as a whole knows nothing about the experiment and the hopeless fiasco that has come of it.

At the last elections the Swarajists obtained a majority over every other group in the Legislative Assembly, and in the Councils of Bengal, Madras, Bihar and Orissa and the Central Provinces, by means best known to themselves, since the elections were contested on a communal platform, that is to say, Hindus *versus* Mohammedans, and this, of course, rendered the whole thing more of a farce than ever. The Hindus naturally gained the majority, and were it not for the police, with British troops in the background, the Mohammedans would express their dissatisfaction in the old-fashioned way.

One of the first exploits of the Swarajists was the destruction of the Reserve Bank Bill. This very necessary measure was the outcome of the labours of the Royal Commission on Indian Finance and Currency, and it embodied the experienced advice of both British and Indian financiers, bankers and other experts. The purpose was to establish a thoroughly modern banking and financial system for India, and to bring the country abreast of the rest of the world in this respect, as well as to place the finances on a firmer basis. It was not a party question at all. The subject was not such as the average member of any political body was capable of discussing in detail, though he would be able to appreciate the general advantages which would be derived. It was a matter of more perfect financial "machinery," the technique of which was only understandable by experts, for the benefit of India. The Swarajists approved, but declared that they must have the management of it. Since this was impossible, the Bill was dropped.

The same thing occurred with a Bill for the establishment of an Indian Navy in place of the Royal Indian Marine. The suggestion was that the latter be abolished, and "that the vessels should be transferred to the Royal Indian Navy, which would be constructed as a combatant force to enable India to enter upon the final stage of her development, and ultimately to undertake her own naval defence." The Assembly, that is to say, the Swarajists, demanded that this should be given to them to play with; but their acquaintance with naval matters being no greater than their knowledge of finance, this Bill was also dropped.

Equally ludicrous is their desire to control the Indian Army. It is well known that Indian troops will not serve under officers other than of their own race, nationality, caste or tribe, excepting only British. It is not at all likely that British officers would continue to serve under a Government wholly Indian and mainly composed of Bengali lawyers, though a few European "soldiers of fortune" might if attracted by sufficiently high pay. Would the Punjabi Mohammedans, or the Rajputs, or the Sikhs take their orders from such a Government? Would the Gurkhas of Nepal enlist in its service? They would not. Lord Birkenhead put the matter in a nutshell when he wrote: "The armed forces of India, bereft of the English military hierarchy, would become little armies concentrated in the north and north-west of the Peninsula, and in the Indian States. Not one regiment would obey the commands of the glib legal politicians who to-day claim the capacity to rule the whole country." The troops would return to their own territories, there to await the opportunity, which would not be long in coming, to loot Bengal. The Bengalis could not

raise an army themselves. They are, notoriously, the most cowardly of all the peoples of India. Yet they are the prime movers in all the unrest that is causing such confusion and making the British Raj the laughing stock of the world. They can fight bravely enough with bold words, but when faced by anything sterner they scream like hysterical women and collapse. On the Maidan, in Calcutta, I once saw a single Highland soldier put to flight an entire Bengali football crowd, some of whom had insulted him. This is the element that is "putting the wind up" the British Government both in India and in England!

As a sort of concession to the Swarajist demand that an inquiry into their administrative abilities should be held before the end of the ten years as specified in the Act, the Home Government decided to appoint a Statutory Commission with Sir John Simon as Chairman. Then the Swarajists proceeded to exhibit the mentality of the *bandar-log* (the monkey-people)* in a more amusing way. The purpose of the Commission was to inquire and "to report to what extent it is desirable to establish the principles of responsible government, or to extend, modify, or restrict the degree of responsible government."

Lord Birkenhead was then Secretary of State for India, and he was bitterly attacked because he would not accelerate this Commission. But he refused so long as violent and seditious agitation and disorder continued in India. Finally, when the Commission was sent out to India, the Swarajists, forgetting (just like the *bandar-log*) all their previous anxiety for it, turned right round in opposition, rejected the vote for its expenses, and organised strikes and boycotts.

* Hanuman is a great divinity, thus no offence should be caused by this comparison.

Their excuse was that they were dissatisfied with the terms of reference which contained the words "*restrict* the degree of responsible government."

The so-called All-India Congress passed a resolution that the Commission should be boycotted "at every stage and in every form," and that mass demonstrations should be organised throughout India. The resolution was moved by Jawaharlal Nehru, son of the leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly. He had recently returned from Russia, and he addressed the delegates as "comrades." This is significant of the element which has recently entered into, and is rapidly taking charge of, the Swaraj movement. But the whole thing fell flat so far as the country at large was concerned.

When the Commission landed in Bombay there would have been no demonstration at all, but for the crowds of shouting schoolboys and students. But in Madras, outside the High Court, there was a mob which got out of hand, and the police had to open fire in order to save the building and those within it. In Calcutta, most of the trouble was caused by college students and rowdies, and some of these came into conflict with the police. Practically everywhere else the boycott failed to materialise since the people paid no attention to the exhortations of the Swarajists.

At Delhi, and a few other places, placards and banners were displayed, bearing the words, "Simon Go Back." The demonstration at Delhi numbered no more than about 200 persons, most of whom did not know what they were there for. They actually cheered the members of the Commission as they drove away! A crowd in India usually signifies nothing. Anything in the way of a *tamasha* (stir, excitement)

will attract one, and it is seldom possible to learn what it is all about.

If the reception of the Simon Commission proved anything at all, it was that the Swaraj movement is confined to an exceedingly small number of personally ambitious men, with a following of semi-anglicised babus, students and schoolboys in the large towns, who do not number more than a fraction of 1 per cent. of the population even there.

Much more serious are the continual efforts of the Assembly and the Councils to hamper the authorities in the prevention of crime, which is becoming more rife; the outcome, doubtless, of seditious propaganda, and of the idea that the "grip" of the British Raj is weakening. The Swarajists lose no opportunity of endeavouring to lower the effectiveness of the police force. Thus in Bihar and Orissa, now that the local administration has fallen more and more into Indian hands, the Police Budget is vigorously opposed every year. Owing to the cutting down of the amount allocated for police purposes, the force has had to be reduced by over 800 men in order to provide a living wage for the remainder; and this although the number of police is smaller in that Province, in proportion to the population, than in any other. The institution of a detective school and the employment of a detective staff, measures which are urgently required to-day to cope with organised crime, have been held up. The housing of the police in suitable barracks and stations is still of vital importance, but the amount of money assigned for the purpose annually is insufficient.

Everywhere else there is the same tendency where the Swarajists are in power. They abuse the police in their speeches and in the Press, with, or (more often) without reason, and do all they can to incite public

feeling against them. Police activities in coping with dacoity, or armed gang robbery, and murder are actually denounced as tyranny and oppression! If the Swarajists gain their ends, they will, no doubt, disband the police force altogether because it was instituted by the British.

Among other outrageous demands in the Legislative Assembly was that all persons arrested under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act should either be brought to trial at once or released. But the terrorism exercised against witnesses, carried even to the extent of murder, was such that it was impossible, in many cases, to expedite the trials. This the Swarajists very well knew, yet they asked that murderous criminals should be immediately turned loose upon society to continue their career of crime! Is not this precisely the mentality of the *bandar-log*?

Again, owing to the incitements of agitators infected with the anarchist doctrine of "direct action," violent disturbances, accompanied by strikes and acts of sabotage, had become so frequent that the Government of India sought increased powers to deal with them. The Bill was opposed tooth and nail by the Swarajists in the Legislative Assembly. In the course of one speech, a leading Swarajist referred to those responsible for the wrecking of trains with consequent loss of life. He said that "in the history of civilisation one will notice that the prophets have always been persecuted; they have been put on the cross or had to flee for their lives from their persecutors." One could wish that he had himself been a victim of the disciples of the "prophets"; he might then have hesitated before delivering himself of such rhetorical nonsense.

The development of India, and its continued

prosperity, depends very largely, one may say entirely, upon commerce with Great Britain, and upon the use of capital furnished by this country. The Swarajists have declared that they will put an end to it. British goods are to be barred out, and the British refused entry into India. The trade of Manchester, Sheffield, and others of our manufacturing towns, is to be made a thing of the past. This is the kind of appeal that the Swarajists circulate broadcast among the people: "O brothers! Let us not pollute our hands by touching English goods. Let the English goods rot in the warehouses, and be eaten by white ants and rats!" It may be asked, to whom would they turn as alternative? To no one. The idea is to bar out Western civilisation altogether.

Sir Walter Willson, for years a member of the Legislative Assembly, in a speech before the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India and Ceylon in 1927, said that it was the policy of anti-European discrimination and expropriation which afforded a rallying ground for all parties of Indian politics; and that Indian competitors were endeavouring to win by political pressure what they were unable to obtain in commercial competition. This was only a partial explanation of the Swarajist policy; actually it goes much further, as I have indicated and will show later on.

In 1928 a Bill was introduced into the Indian Legislature to prohibit the trading of ships on the coasts of India and Burma unless such ships were actually owned by Indians. This would mean, of course, the killing outright of the Indian coastal trade. Commenting upon this at the annual meeting of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, on December 12, 1929, Lord Inchcape pointed out that, if the measure were passed, it would

be "an act of confiscation and expropriation altogether foreign to the principles of the nations which form the British Empire. It would be a blow to Imperial trade and to the comity of nations.

"A Bill of this confiscatory nature," he continued, "would no doubt lead to similar expropriation of other British commercial enterprises which have been of immense value to India. Jute mills, cotton mills, woollen mills, paper mills, tea gardens, coffee plantations, ironworks, banking institutions, insurance companies, and millions of British capital which have been invested in India would go by the board. The suggestion is unthinkable. It would be nothing short of monstrous if the British community in India were to be debarred from trading there, and it would not be good for the millions of Indians to whom they give employment."

That such a measure would cause incalculable injury to India herself would never enter the minds of the Swarajists, nor would they be able to appreciate the fact if it were put to them. It serves, however, to indicate what a mess they will make of things if ever the ruling power is turned over to them.

Sir Basil Blackett spoke the plain truth when he said: "Every opportunity that is given to it (the Legislative Assembly) of showing that it has responsibility, and can use it, is taken to prove that it is irresponsible."

If we turn to the Provincial Councils, we find the same evidence of incompetence, and of the inability to initiate anything of a constructive character. Like the *bandar-log*, they pull everything to pieces that is put into their hands. We find everywhere the same insensate obstruction for the mere sake of obstructing. Thus in Bengal and in the Central Provinces the

Governors were compelled by the recalcitrant attitude of the Swarajists to take over all the "transferred" subjects from the Indian Ministers. One explanation of this is, I think, that the average Indian, especially the Bengali, is inordinately vain. It gives him a sense of importance to be able to flout the Viceroy, or the Governor of a Province, with impunity.

In Bombay, Madras, the United Provinces and the Punjab, saner counsels prevailed, mainly owing to the presence of members who were able to keep the "impossibilists" in check.

In Bengal, the Calcutta Corporation, dominated by the Swarajists, has long been a byword for jobbery and incompetence. The comment of the Government of Bengal was that a well-drilled Swarajist caucus administered affairs from a purely political instead of a civic point of view; and until the administration was conducted in the interests of the inhabitants of Calcutta, and not of a political party, the chances of improved administration were small. There was no check on extravagance, and arrears of taxes accumulated, whilst "persons of influence" prevented their collection. The most objectionable relaxations of the building rules were permitted, the interests of the public being subordinated to private or party claims.

From the Central Provinces it was reported: "The state of the accounts of local bodies has, generally speaking, deteriorated. The affairs of local bodies are in a state of confusion."

The Province of Bihar and Orissa furnishes information which enables us to answer the question previously asked as to how the Swarajists obtain their votes. It is stated that the electors were apathetic, "and their votes are generally secured by appeals to pecuniary, religious and other motives. Meanwhile

the misappropriation of public funds is generally regarded more as a subject for mirth and envy than for reprobation."

To those who know India, there is nothing surprising about this; it is only what they would expect. The idea of public responsibility is utterly foreign to the Indian mind. The only interest in a vote is how many rupees, or even annas, it will sell for. The candidates for office have no conception of public duty. The only interests of importance to them are those of the religious community to which they belong, Hindu or Mohammedan as the case may be; with the Hindu caste comes next, and with both family and personal advantage follows closely. Nothing more! The wider sense of nationhood is non-existent because India is not a nation, but a collection of mutually hostile groups, each seeking to get the "better" of the others.

As regards the jocular attitude towards the misappropriation of public funds, this is quite natural in a country where bribery and corruption are not considered as in any way reprehensible, but are among the ordinary methods of furthering one's business or personal aims. If one is found out, it is a sign of stupidity; a clever man is not found out!

Efficiency in public administration is sacrificed to nepotism, everywhere prevalent owing to the "family system." The Indian family lives, as far as it can, in one house, father, mother, sons and their wives, daughters, nephews, etc., all together; or, if not in one house, in domiciles as near as possible to each other. There is a family fund to which all who are earning contribute. If any one of them is out of work, he falls back on his family, and it is up to those in work to use such influence as they possess to get

him employment. An excellent idea in its way, but it is easy to see what it leads to. When a member of the family is elected to the Assembly, or the Council (where he may become a Minister), or to the Corporation, or if he is employed by any of these, or by the Government, or by a private firm, he is expected to do his best to get such of his relatives as are eligible into jobs. The relationship is not necessarily made known. If there is any defalcation or embezzlement practicable, it will be done without ruth, scruple or remorse; and those who are "in" it, all relatives together, will lie through thick and thin to shield each other, or to put the blame on someone else. In saying this, I am expressing no more than is known to everyone who has had experience of public affairs or of business in India.

Thus from Bombay there come illuminating examples of corruption relating to 155 municipalities, as shown by the following table. The first column gives the year; the second, the cases of embezzlement of municipal funds; the third, the arrears of revenues in the municipal towns; and the fourth, the municipalities with a bad record of collection. The first three years, divided from the others by a rule, were before the Reforms had taken the administration out of European hands and turned it over to Indians:

1916-17	3	Rs. 296,555	7
1917-18	5	„ 430,000	6
1918-19	15	„ 406,000	7
1919-20	19	„ 373,000	16
1920-21	30	„ 504,741	19
1921-22	16	„ 872,575	34
1922-23	38	„ 1,089,825	36
1923-24	40	„ 1,058,068	37
1924-25	51	„ 1,137,500	64

Commenting upon this, Lord Birkenhead says: "Such is the distressing record of incompetence and corruption which already accompany the increased responsibility of Indians in their own affairs. Since Indian officialdom has shown itself so inefficient in the minor affairs of the country, it is senseless to argue that it should be permitted to control the finances of the whole nation. It must not be forgotten that at least £100,000,000 of European capital is invested in India; the trusteeship of this vast wealth cannot be abandoned to the incompetence of the eloquent peroration-monger."

In respect of British capital invested in India, the Swarajists have declared that they will confiscate it, and will repudiate all loans, if ever they get the power. It has been estimated that the British public has invested more money in India than in any other country. An authority in the *Financial Times* last January (1930), put the British investments in Indian loans and trade at £700,000,000. It is unthinkable that even a sentimental, pacifist Government in England will grant further powers to a little handful of incapable irreconcilables who would, without the slightest thought of the consequences, involve their own country in ruin, and this in something not far short of it. The first effects of Indian Swaraj, here in this country, would be not only heavy pecuniary loss, but an enormous increase in the figures of unemployment owing to the falling off in the export of manufactured goods.

The vapourings of the Swarajists have already begun to produce signs of the catastrophe they are inviting. The mere mention of the word "repudiation" at the Lahore Congress on January 1, 1930, sent down the price of Indian Stocks sharply. On

January 10, Sir Basil Blackett, addressing the Indian Section of the Royal Society of Arts, said that, as the result of political uncertainty, capital had been tending to leave India. The Indian Government had been forced to curtail its capital programme, particularly in the sphere of railway development. On February 23 it was reported that the most reliable information from financial circles in Bombay and Calcutta indicated a steady flight abroad, through the medium of the exchange banks, of Indian capital.

This should cause the Swarajists to pause and think, were they capable of such an exercise. But it will not; they are wholly insensate. The only argument that could convince them of their folly would be an Afghan knife or a Gurkha kukri, and they would fail to understand this until it struck home.

Another imbecility is the "no tax" movement, part of the "civil disobedience" campaign. The ryots are being incited to refuse payment of the land revenue, and many villages have responded. On January 18, 1930, it was reported that meetings were to be held throughout India for this purpose. The words "throughout India," however, only indicate the limited areas where the Swarajists are able to exert their influence. Such a campaign as this would not be permitted for a moment in any of the Indian States. The (Swarajist) Congress Working Committee resolved that "India must sever the British connection and attain 'Purna Swaraj,'" that is, complete independence. They went on to say: "We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We shall therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing as far as we can from all voluntary association with the British Government. We shall prepare for civil

disobedience, including the non-payment of taxes." They expressed their belief that they could gain their ends by stopping the payment of taxes "without committing acts of violence."

The Swarajist leaders always declare that *they themselves* will not commit acts of violence. Of course not! They know well enough that their incitements will encourage others to commit them, but they are too careful of their own skins to participate. Here we get a good illustration of the cowardly nature of the Swarajist agitator, who is, in nine cases out of ten, a Bengali. There have already been conflicts with the police arising out of this no tax campaign, but the men who caused them were not there!

The Collector of Ahmedabad, we are informed, issued orders suspending the full land revenue in seven villages, and half the land revenue in forty-seven villages, but collecting fully in six. Of course the concession did not satisfy the farmers who demanded the suspension of the full revenue in all the villages. A movement of this kind is likely to spread if the ryots can be brought to believe that they can easily evade payment of the land revenue. If the authorities give way, as this Collector seems to have done, it will mean that no money will be available for the public services, including the police who protect the farmers from dacoity, or for further improvements in the country for the benefit of the people. The Swarajists are forging a two-edged weapon which will recoil upon themselves should their dream of ruling the country ever materialise. If the ryots can refuse payment of taxes to the British Raj, they certainly will to a Vakil Raj.*

Fortunately, there is an element of commonsense

* Government by lawyers.

in India which may save the situation if it ever comes to a really serious crisis. Thus the President of the Provincial Moslem League, and the Moslem members of the United Provinces Council, issued a statement on January 18, 1930, expressing their fundamental disagreement with the independence resolution of the Lahore (Hindu) Congress, which they declared would constitute a serious danger to the Moslem community. Of course it would, for "independence," as understood by the Swarajists, means Hindu predominance, and this the Mohammedans will not tolerate. A resolution was passed at the All-India Moslem Conference held at Delhi in 1929, under the presidency of the Aga Khan, declaring that no new Constitution would be acceptable to the Moslems unless separate Moslem electorates were maintained and safeguards provided against communal legislation. In February, 1930, the Central Moslem Federation held a meeting at Delhi which passed a resolution very properly condemning the Government for attempting to conciliate the no-taxers whose aim is separation from the Empire.

There is also a body of sane opinion among the Hindus which will eventually make its influence felt. Thus a meeting of the All-India Non-Brahmin Congress Committee met on February 23, 1930, at Bombay, under the presidency of Sir Annepu P. Patro, the former Education Minister in Madras. He urged that the non-brahmins who represented the masses should co-operate with the Government, and with all parties which were not of "Congress mentality" and not carried away by empty and fruitless resolutions. A resolution was passed welcoming the Viceroy's pronouncement, and pledging non-brahmin co-operation in making the Round Table Conference

successful. The designation of this organisation as *non-brahmin*, and its dissociation from "Congress mentality," are significant of much.

The reason why we hear so much about the Swarajists is because they are able to be vocal in English. Thus more attention is paid to them than they deserve, since they are an inconsiderable minority even in those towns and districts where they have the most influence. There are not lacking signs that their antics are arousing feelings both of disgust and apprehension in the minds of sensible Indians of all communities, for these are well aware of what would happen, and what they would stand to lose, should the Swarajists attain their objective.

There is just a possibility, however, that the Swarajists may create a ludicrous, rather than a serious, situation, given enough "rope." It is ludicrous even now! A troupe of comical clowns could not make greater fools of themselves than the leaders of Swaraj have succeeded in doing. There may follow expressions of public opinion such as were seen in Ludhiana a few years ago, when a petition was presented to the Lieutenant-Governor to replace the Hindu officials of the Administration by Europeans. In one of the towns was erected a triumphal arch bearing the words: "For God's sake save us from the rule of our fellow-countrymen!"

CHAPTER X

THE ROOTS OF UNREST

The National Congress—Brahmin Intrigue Again—Western Education—A Caste Movement—The Native Press—Partition of Bengal—Campaign of Lies—The Rowlatt Acts—Passive Resistance—Riot and Murder—Amritsar—The Moplah Rising—A Mad Mahatma.

THE first meeting of the Indian National Congress was held at Bombay in 1885, which date may be taken as marking the beginning of the active Swaraj Movement. But it had its roots in previous events, as far back as the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck (1828-1835) when Indians began to be taken into the confidence of the Ruling Power.

It is right that the people should have a voice in the government and administration of their own country, more especially if the ruling class belongs to another nationality, even though of the same race. But, in India, the people never have had such a voice, do not express it now, and it is not the intention of the Swarajists that they ever shall. When, as to-day, the few who enjoy the privilege use it only for slandering, defaming and lying about those who have given it to them, it is time they were silenced.

The class that has availed itself of the opportunities offered in this direction is the brahmin caste. The brahmins have always endeavoured to monopolise education, and they have largely succeeded. In the

older days they withheld education from all castes below the vaisyas, and refused to allow any save themselves to read the sacred books even though some might learn to read.

We have seen how the brahmins destroyed the civilisation which had developed under the Emperor Asoka, when Buddhism was the predominant religion in India. If there were such a thing as a "secret history" of the later phases of the Mogul Empire, it is more than probable that we should find the causes of the "rot" in brahmin intrigue. It was this that led to the Mutiny, when the brahmins were all-powerful in Bengal, and it was they who fomented disaffection among the Indian troops. Bengal was then, as now, the centre and focus of all disaffection, unrest and sedition, and the brahmin caste, the closest and most exclusive "secret society" in the world, is behind it to-day.

The object is now, as before, not India for the Indians, but India for the brahmins. The Mutiny failed, but during the 27 or 28 years between that event and the first meeting of the National Congress, the brahmins never ceased working towards another effort, the effects of which we are witnessing.

When I went to India in 1922 it was with a perfectly open mind. I went there to learn. I had had considerable experience in the Far East before, but not in India, although I had corresponded with Indians, notably the late Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who, I regret to say, misled me considerably, as did also the late Mr. H. M. Hyndman, whom I knew personally. When in India, I made it my business, not to advance my own ideas, which were then unformed, but to obtain as much information as possible from all classes of the people with whom I was able to come

in contact. These included Swarajists, from the late Mr. C. R. Das, and other leaders of the same school, to the University students; merchants, business and professional men, many of whom were not Swarajists; schoolmasters and clerks, who usually were; Hindus, Mohammedans and Anglo-Indians,* and representatives of various castes, down to sweepers and coolies; Europeans who had been born in the country, or had spent many years there; officials of every kind; employees on the railways and in the factories; peasants, and many others with whom Europeans do not usually come into contact.

In this inquiry I was assisted by two Indians, one a Hindu and the other a Mohammedan, the first being a Swarajist and the second not; and who, having taken me to many places where they had no business to, desired that, if I wrote anything about it, I would not mention their names. The various impressions, and the information, thus gained at first hand, led me by degrees to the conclusions at which I finally arrived and have set down in these pages.

The Indian Congress was very moderate in its tone at the outset; it appeared to be well-disposed towards the British and willing to co-operate with them. It was greeted with sympathy by those who desired to see Indians begin to take a more active interest and part in the affairs of their own country. But gradually it began to assume the "colour" which the influences, ever at work behind the scenes, desired. To-day there is no moderate party in the Congress, it is wholly extremist and anti-British.

* Anglo-Indian is the modern name for Eurasian. For some reason or other the latter term is objected to by half-castes, though it is the more correct designation.

It had long been seen that the influence of European civilisation presented a formidable threat to the caste system, and to the position of the brahmins. That Western education had its value they were not slow to realise, and they proceeded to adapt this to their own purposes. The Hindus, far more than the Mohammedans, have availed themselves of the educational facilities which we have provided. This is explicable for the reason that Hindu philosophy affords a much wider outlook than the narrow, dogmatic theology based upon the Koran. Nevertheless, orthodox Hinduism, resting as it does upon the authority of the divinely inspired Vedas, rejects such findings of modern science as are not in harmony with them. In this it differs from Buddhism, which has nothing to fear from science, but looks to it for further evidence in support of its fundamental teachings.

If advantage can be taken of Western education in the furtherance of our aims, say the brahmins, by all means let us make use of it. But the danger is lest its essentially rationalistic and critical spirit should lead to inquiry into Authority which must not, upon any account, be questioned. This is what is actually happening, but, so far, only to a negligible extent. Yet, once given a start, there is no knowing where it will end. So long as we can keep our hold on the people, well and good; let some of them be educated on Western lines, we can make use of them. But the extension of elementary education among the lower castes, and the out-castes, is leading to a denial of our claims. Thus we get such bodies as the Non-Brahmin Congress Committee, and organisations among the Depressed Classes for the assertion of their right to be recognised as human

beings. Furthermore, the establishment of the machinery of Western civilisation, in the shape of motor-cars, railways, electric light, telegraphs and telephones, manufacturing industries, and modern industrial methods generally, all tend in the direction of conditions inimical to caste, and to the weakening of our position. These things are dangerous to the social order upon which we have always depended, and are therefore "satanic." They must be driven out of India.

The brahmin's injunction to the Hindu is that of Bhishma to Yudhsthira: "Thou shouldst never dispute about the Teaching, and then seek to have those doubts solved into which thou mayst arrive. Obey what *I* say without scruple of any kind. Follow me like a blind man, or like one without being possessed of sense himself has to depend upon that of another."*

So long as the Hindu is prepared to do this (as most are) Western education is an advantage to the brahmins, and they have succeeded in turning it to their own advantage very cleverly.

Thus we find that the "spear head" of the anti-British agitation consists of the semi-anglicised element of babus and students, the majority of whom are Bengalis; but the hands grasping the "shaft" are those of the brahmin. The advantage is obvious, especially if the effort is organised. Thus the Swaraj movement is able to obtain a wider publicity, and to attract more attention, than it really deserves.

The majority of people here at Home are under the impression that the All-India Congress Party is representative of all communities and classes of

* *Anucasana Parva*, Mahabharata.

the people throughout India, and that Swaraj is a progressive movement aiming at the establishment of a more popular form of government. Nothing could be less in harmony with the facts. The All-India Congress Party is composed exclusively of caste Hindus, and its aim is not the government of India for the benefit of the peoples of India, but for that of the higher castes. Instead of being progressive, it is reactionary, and its object is the establishment of an aristocratic oligarchy. The same may be said of the so-called All-Parties Conference, in which the great majority of the Mohammedans, all the Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Depressed Classes, Indian Christians, important sections of the old Liberal Party, and the "Justice" Party of Madras, were not represented. The total following of the Swaraj Party is not half a million all told, on its own showing.

As regards the term "All-India," fully 99 per cent. of the peoples of India know nothing about the Congress Party, the All-Parties Conference, or Swaraj. Of this, of course, the brahmins, and those behind the movement, are well aware, and they are not concerned to spread such knowledge. If, at the appointed time, the masses of the people can be united in the name of one or other of their fantastic gods, or roused by play upon their superstitions, to revolt successfully in favour of they know not what, the brahmins will have gained their end. But, with all their cleverness, they are purblind, they cannot see beyond that end.

The people of the mofussil, the country-folk, as a whole, distrust and dislike the sleek, glib-tongued babu from the towns. They do not understand his jargon about the rights of man, capitalist exploitation, Imperialist tyranny, and all the rest of it, got

second-hand from English books, half digested—how translated into the vernacular, heaven knows—nor do they care two pice about the franchise, or voting into the local Council a man who, they very rightly suspect, has some ulterior object in view, and not their interests at all. But they will believe the brahmin priest, and there the mischief lies.

In Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and elsewhere, it is the brahmins who are behind the entire anti-British agitation. The native Press—the most ignorant and illiterate in the world—is almost wholly seditious. Every one of these "rags" is either owned, edited or controlled by brahmins.* The Kulin brahmins of Bengal are a particularly bad lot. They encourage the licentious Durgapuja rites in the Kali temple at Calcutta which is the religious "pivot" on which the whole Swaraj movement turns.

I have listened patiently to what many Swarajists had to say in their peculiar, clipped "babu English." I came to the conclusion at once that their "anglicism" was a veneer, and subsequent experience proved that I was right. I heard all the current ideas of our Socialists, and even of the Communists, garbled in a curious and often amusing manner. When asked how they proposed to apply these principles generally throughout India, they replied vaguely that they would make a beginning locally, and then "spread outwards." Doubtless they would, until something stopped them!

But I did not say this, for, given a supposedly sympathetic listener, the average English-speaking Indian, especially the Swarajist, can talk faster, and

* It is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to get at the responsible persons behind Indian publications, even though their "inspiration" is well known.

to greater length, than any man I know. It was obvious that these young fellows had learned all the catch phrases by rote, without stopping to reflect upon their meaning and application, or whether they had any. They were very earnest, and very proud of being "advanced," yet underneath it all lay a perceptible uneasiness, for at the back of their minds was always the influence of their religion and of the family priest. A very few were openly heterodox, and these spoke quite frankly of their distrust and dislike of the brahmins. But when "the day" comes, if it ever does, the brahmins will know how to deal with, and dispose of, these "advanced" young men when they have served their turn. For the time being they are useful and therefore encouraged.

I have said that the Congress Party is not representative of all the communities in India. It is not, because it is essentially Hindu. The Mohammedans have always regarded it with disfavour. Thus they formed the All-India Moslem League, and are by no means disposed to support the Hindu Swaraj Movement. The Mohammedans have aims of their own, as the Hindus would speedily discover should the hand of the British Raj ever relax. Such discontent as exists among the Moslems is on account of those aims being held in check. This has been expressed to me, quite openly, by Mohammedans on more than one occasion. But, on the whole, the Mohammedans are loyal to the British, from whom they get a "fair deal," which they know would not be the case from the Hindus. At one time it seemed as if there were going to be a change on account of the Khilafat movement, which has now "fizzled out."

The history of the Congress Party would take

too long even to outline from its inception; but its tendency was made evident by the agitation over the partition of Bengal, which began in 1905. The partition of the Province was not the cause of the seditious activities which followed, but a welcome excuse. The reason for the partition was that the Bengal Presidency was so large as to be unwieldy. The Mohammedans were in favour because they numbered two-thirds of the population of the new Province. It was partly on this account, but mainly because of the opportunity afforded for an open display of anti-British agitation, that the Hindus opposed it. I have said that Indians, at any rate the Swarajists, are liars, and here we have striking evidence of it. They went through the districts which were to be affected by the change, saying that the object of the Government was the deportation of the people, that taxation was to be doubled, and so forth. As usual, the students, and other ill-balanced youths, were thrust into the "firing-line," whilst the real instigators remained under cover.

These last were bold and belligerent on paper, one leaflet describing the English as "lying cheats, who are ruining our life in the world, ruining our industries, and importing their own manufactures, plundering our fields and throwing us into the jaws of fever, famine and plague. It is our blood they are sucking. Shall we bear it any more? These Feringhees have divided our Golden Bengal into two parts. Swear in the name of Kali that we Hindus and Mussalmans will serve our country united, and will behead anyone who obstructs!" The suggestion that a Mussalman should swear in the name of Kali is comical, but the humour of it would not strike the Swarajist.

If this agitation proved anything at all, it was the necessity for partition, but the effect was to scare the Government which annulled the measure in 1911, and thus admitted itself defeated by a rabble composed mostly of schoolboys incited by lawyers. The so-called "National Volunteers" were called out, and riots followed in various places, for the Mohammedans joined issue and would have made short work of the volunteers but for the police.

The Swaraj "hounds" were now in full cry, and they have never ceased yelping since. I have spent many hours over the Indian papers, written and printed in what is sometimes very odd English, and regret that I did not keep the amusing collection I then made. Others of an older date shown to me were funnier still. They are terrific in their denunciations, terrifying in their threats, and entirely unrestrained in their lying. Mr. J. D. Rees, in his excellent work, *The Real India*, preserves some of them of the period just after the partition of Bengal. The brahmin editor of the *Vehari* said that the only way to free India from slavery must be by the sword.

He described the British Empire as "Hell on earth," and the English as "surpassing Nero, Nadir Shah, Tamerlane, and even Satan, in cruelty. The whole world hates the English, and the mercifulness of God is being doubted because success is being granted to them." The *Deccan Herald* called upon the Bengalis (!) to rise and throw the Europeans into the sea, and to kill 50,000 of them. The editor of the *Punjabi* stated that all Englishwomen went to dances for the purposes of prostitution. This scoundrel was, very properly, sent to gaol. The *Hind Swarajya* of Bombay said that the English led the Indians into sin, and that, by their teaching, adultery was spreading

in Indian homes. The *Yugantar* of Calcutta let itself go like this: "Revolution is the only salvation for an enslaved society! With a firm resolve you can bring English rule to an end in a single day! Dedicate your lives as an offering at the temple of Liberty! Without bloodshed the conquest of the goddess [Kali] will not be accomplished! Let the heads of the intruders be given as an offering! Let 70,000,000 hands take up the sword! Beggars and fakirs have distributed pamphlets among the native army in Rawal Pindi, the cup of the English is full!"

Here we have an indication of some of the emissaries of the Swarajists, beggars and fakirs (religious mendicants) who wander through the country, and evidence of how efforts are made to influence the Indian Army, so far without success.

It was freely stated that the British introduced the plague into India, and I have myself heard it alleged that we inoculate rats with plague in order to start epidemics. The British Government was also accused of poisoning the wells. The lie that the English greased cartridges with pigs' fat served its purpose in the Mutiny. Others of a similar order are that imported salt is purified with blood, sugar with bones, and cotton goods are sized with the fat of pigs and cows for the express purpose of causing caste-contamination. There is no lengths in the way of evil speaking, lying and slandering to which the Swarajists will not go. Am I not justified in characterising them as unconscionable liars?

Of course they have a religious sanction for it. According to the Code of Manu, lying is permissible in respect of five things—I give the interpretation in parentheses: Sexual gratification (denial of illicit

indulgence); marriage (acquiring a wife by stratagem); food eaten by cows (denial of damage done by the sacred beasts); fuel for sacrifice (denial of theft if taken for this purpose); *the advantage of the brahmin* (requires no explanation!). In the Mahabharata Krishna says, "these five kinds of falsehood have been declared to be sinless." The fifth of the series may be taken to cover anything said or written against the British. The questions that arise in one's mind are: Have we been wise or foolish in granting these people any powers of self-government at all? Are they capable of exercising such powers intelligently, or even honestly?

Fortunately only a very small minority, even in the large towns, can read English. But the mischief is done by the repetition of these lies by word of mouth. They are repeated and enlarged upon until they attain gigantic proportions. But what are we to think of the cowardice of a Government which does not take drastic steps to stop this kind of thing? Possibly it is because of the outcry which would immediately be raised in the House of Commons. When I was in India, the questions asked in the House concerning Indian affairs were subjects of amusement, and sometimes of indignation, so enormous was the ignorance exhibited.

They do things better in the Indian States. Thus a Swarajist agitator was promptly ejected from Travancore; in Mysore a newspaper editor was publicly rebuked for making unproven charges against the British Government; and in Kashmir a proclamation was issued prohibiting all forms of agitation against the British. In several States Swarajists have been met at the railway station (which, as explained in Chapter VIII, is under the

jurisdiction of the Indian Government) by the State police, and not allowed to leave it. They had, therefore, to return whence they came. If we did the same, we would be accused of "Russian methods," as indeed we often are, not only by the Swarajists, but by foolish people in England who, in their ignorance, are even more dangerous.

There are various societies associated with the Swaraj Party, one of which is the Arya Samaj, whose object is supposed to be the teaching of ethics and the advancement of education. It is, however, violently seditious; and so is the Brahma Samaj, which claims to be essentially a religious organisation. Both are, for everything in India is religious, even lying.

In 1919 Mr. Gandhi came to the fore with his campaign of "passive resistance" against the Rowlatt Acts. These Acts, of which there were two, were framed on the report of a Committee, appointed under Mr. Justice Rowlatt, by the Indian Government, to inquire into the origin and extent of revolutionary conspiracies and criminal activities, which were becoming more and more dangerous. There had been no less than 210 outrages of a revolutionary character, and 101 attempts, in Bengal alone, since 1906; and between January 1 and June 30, 1916, there were 14 murders, the result of seditious incitements. There had been many dacoities, the proceeds of which went, in some cases, into the revolutionary "war chest," murders of police officers, bomb outrages, and innumerable cowardly and violent assaults. The Acts gave the Government larger, but by no means excessive, powers to deal with this kind of crime; no more, in fact, than the law in England possesses at the present time. There is

nothing in them that the ordinary, sane, orderly citizen would find to disapprove; certainly nothing of an "oppressive" nature.

The Swarajists in the Legislative Assembly and elsewhere were immediately up in arms. The discussions in the Assembly exhibited their usual fatuity, irresponsibility, empty rhetoric and mock heroics. Then Mr. Gandhi launched his *Satyagraha*, or "passive resistance" campaign. But it was not passive by any means! There was a very active dissemination of every kind of lie and misrepresentation imaginable; and the imagination of the Swarajist is astonishingly fertile when it comes to this kind of thing. Emissaries were sent out far and wide, from Bengal of course.

Among the lies were statements to the effect that, under the new laws, marriage was forbidden without the consent of the British Government; the crops of the ryots were to be seized; in case of death, fees must be paid before the body could go to the burning *ghat*; if two or three people were seen talking together they would be sent to prison, and so forth. It was proclaimed that the British Raj was at an end, and that Swaraj had arrived, and the people were exhorted to "Kill all Europeans! Murder them wherever found!"

It was not long before these incitements produced their *calculated* effects, the cowardly instigators taking care to be well away from the scene before the disturbances took place. There was trouble in the Punjab among the Sikhs, though it is doubtful whether Swaraj was altogether connected with this, though it added fuel to the flames. But the Sikh community, as a whole, assisted in the suppression.

In Ahmedabad there were riots of a different

character. The worst outrage here was the dragging out and burning alive of an Indian magistrate, whose clothing was soaked with kerosene and set alight, whilst Government records, looted from the office, were piled on his writhing body and also burned.

The Amritsar affair, as may be remembered, caused something of a sensation in England. The mob began to act on the injunction to kill all Europeans. Among other places looted was the National Bank of India, whose English manager, and assistant manager, were killed, and their bodies burned on a pyre of the office furniture. The European manager of the Alliance Bank was also murdered, and a European lady was brutally attacked and left for dead in the street.

Martial law was proclaimed, and order was restored, but only after much loss of life and destruction of property. For taking the only steps that were possible under the circumstances, General Dyer was reprimanded and retired from the Army. Given another outbreak of the same kind, the civil officials and the military officer commanding may well be in doubt what to do. If they hesitate, bearing in mind the fate of General Dyer, or if they put it down, they will be equally liable to punishment!

As I have said before, the alternative would be to evacuate all Europeans and Anglo-Indians, draw a cordon of troops round, and let the rioters "do their damnedest." The lesson would be a salutary one in India, and it is just possible that even our sentimentalists, here in England, who have never a thought for the innocent victims, might learn something.

This trouble in the Punjab encouraged the Afghans to make an effort reminiscent of old times, and Amanullah started a raid that led to war with

Afghanistan. Then the cowardly Bengali Swarajists began to show the "yellow streak" that enters so largely into their composition, and called for a political truce until the Afghans were disposed of! Even Gandhi admitted that he had been guilty of what he called "a Himalayan blunder," and ostentatiously entered upon a three days' fast! Did he learn anything from the blunder? Not a bit of it!

Soon afterwards there occurred trouble among the Mohammedans, arising out of what was called the Khilafat movement. This had really nothing to do with India. Its object was to restore the Sultan of Turkey to power, from which the British were said to have deposed him. Eventually, when it was seen that the Turks would not have the Sultan back at any price, it died out. But Gandhi thought that here was an opportunity to get the Mohammedans to join in a revolution, and he restarted his passive resistance in conjunction with them. The leaders of the Khilafat agitation were two brothers, Moslem fanatics, but the Mohammedan community, as a whole, would have nothing to do with it.

In Malabar something like a revolution broke out, and it developed, as all such disturbances in India invariably do, into a murderous conflict between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. The Moplahs of Malabar are fanatical Moslems, and they were, of course, entirely ignorant of what Mr. Gandhi's "non-co-operation" meant. Their idea of being passive was to "set about" the Hindus and try forcibly to convert them to Islam, with every circumstance of murderous atrocity, accompanied by looting, burning and the rape of women.

Mrs. Besant, who cannot be altogether acquitted

of a charge of contributing to unrest in India, blamed Mr. Gandhi. She wrote: "The sympathy of the Moderates is not . . . with the murderers, the looters, the ravishers." But the Moderates, nevertheless, had done nothing to restrain Mr. Gandhi. Mrs. Besant continued: "The misery is beyond description; girl wives with eyes half-blind with weeping, distraught with terror; women who have seen their husbands hacked to pieces before their eyes in the way Moplahs consider as religious . . . men who have lost all, crushed, desperate."

As for Gandhi himself, he delivered the following pronouncement: "The forcible conversions [of the Hindus] are terrible, but the Moplah bravery must command admiration. These Malabaris are not fighting for the love of it. They are fighting for what they consider is religion, and in a manner which they consider is religious." Are these the words of a sane man?

It was only by calling out the military that the Moplah trouble was stopped, and even this evoked a protest from Mr. Gandhi. He actually wanted the troops and police to be recalled, and his non-co-operators to be allowed to use gentle persuasion with the Moplahs. Had the Government acceded to his request, stipulating that he should lead the passive resisters in person, there would then have been an end of him and of them!

In November, 1921, the Prince of Wales' visit to India was made the occasion of Swarajist disorder in Bombay and in Calcutta, when the usual stream of lies was turned on. The British Government was said to have come to an end. The Congress Committee declared a *hartal*, that is, the closing of shops and suspension of business. Those who

refused to observe it were violently assaulted and some were murdered, and the troops had eventually to be called out in Bombay. Then Mr. Gandhi gave it out as his intention to enter upon another fast for twenty-four hours every Monday! This humbug was only a species of self-advertisement, for he immediately started a campaign of "non-violent mass disobedience," with the support of the Indian (Swarajist) National Congress. He actually had the impudence to issue an "ultimatum" to the Viceroy. In return he received a serious warning.

Just at this time (February, 1922) occurred another incident which illustrated what "non-violence" leads to. At Chauri Chaura, in the United Provinces, a mob of Swaraj "volunteers" attacked a police station, where they murdered twenty-two Indian constables, soaked their bodies in oil and burned them. They then proceeded to wreck the railway, and to cut all the telegraph and telephone wires.

A month later Mr. Gandhi was arrested and sent to jail for six years, but released at the end of two. He ought to have been sent right out of the country, and kept out for the rest of his life.

Owing to gratuitous attacks by the Swarajist Press on certain of the Indian princes, because they would not permit agitation in their States, the Indian Government found it necessary to take steps to stop such attacks. This was denounced as tyranny, oppression, and illustrative of "Russian methods."

In Assam the effects of non-co-operation fell completely flat. Swarajist emissaries tried to persuade the people that if they refused to pay the land revenue, no one would bid for their belongings if the authorities tried to sell them up. But, since the land belongs to the Crown, the Government

can forgo the revenue and resume possession of the land. This brought such as were inclined to listen to their senses.

Among other things it was announced that Gandhi was a god! We know that he was called a "Mahatma," but this was further promotion! Doubtless, as gods go in India, he would be as good as most, but even he would be unable to do what was promised, remit the land revenue and enable the cultivators to retain it and the land as well. They were also promised abolition of the forest dues, and many other things; in fact, the inauguration of a new "golden age," a happy state of arcadian anarchy, where there would be no restrictions of any kind. But the people, or such of them as were foolish enough to listen, soon found out the folly of it all, and they admitted as much to the then Commissioner in the words: "Sahib, the *babu-log* told us that Gandhi was Raja, and we believed them. Now that we know once more that you are Raja, of course we shall obey you."*

The whole agitation eventually died down, as it would everywhere else, if only the Indian Government would take courage and put a definite stop to the incitements of the Swarajist emissaries. This could easily be done, but then, of course, there are the sentimentalists at Home to be reckoned with; these seem determined that nothing short of a violent and widespread revolution shall take place in India. If it does, theirs will be the blame!

The people of India, as a whole, are not in a state of unrest. There would be no trouble at all but for the lies of the few malcontents in the large

* *India on Trial*, by J. E. Woolacott. (Methuen.)

towns, chiefly Bengalis, lawyers without practices, "failed B.As.," and others who want Government jobs and cannot get them. I know the type well; it is utterly contemptible.

"What have the Congress and the Khilafat movements done?" asked Sir Harcourt Butler, Governor of the United Provinces in 1921. His reply to this question applies, not only to the U.P., but everywhere else:

Satyagraha, which Mr. Gandhi himself pronounced to be a "Himalayan blunder," ended in disgrace. The attempt to boycott colleges and schools failed signally. It did not affect in this Province 1 per cent. of the students and scholars. The attempt to boycott the law courts was wholly unsuccessful. The appeal to surrender titles and offices held under Government fell on deaf ears. The efforts to seduce soldiers and policemen were almost in vain. But, with each successive failure, they have sown wide the seeds of racial hatred and the spirit of lawlessness. The results cry out against them and their works. Their hands are dripping with innocent blood, and the cries of ruined homes and ravished women have gone up to heaven.

As I write, we are getting it again in full blast! Here is a message recently (January 27, 1930) issued by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a *brahmin*, of course, President of the Indian National Congress. It is said to have been printed in hundreds of languages and dialects, to be distributed broadcast throughout the country:

We believe in the inalienable right of the Indian people—as it is the right of all other people—to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and to have the necessaries of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe, also, that if any Government deprive people of these rights and oppress them, these people have further the right to alter and abolish that oppression. The British

Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of freedom, but has debased itself by the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever its British connection and attain complete independence.

We hold it a crime against man and God to submit any longer to this rule that has caused this four-fold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of gaining freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing all voluntary association from the British Government and practise civil disobedience, including the non-payment of taxes.

We are convinced that if we withdraw voluntary help and stop payment of taxes, without doing violence, even under provocation, an end to this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore solemnly resolve to carry out the instructions of the National Congress for establishing complete independence.

This is clever. Its cleverness consists in the number of lies that have been packed into so small a compass. The Indian peoples have never enjoyed such freedom as they do under British rule. They have not been deprived of their rights or their liberty, nor are they oppressed. They are not being exploited by the British, but they are by their own fellow-countrymen (as we have seen); nor is India ruined economically, politically, culturally or spiritually. On the contrary, all our efforts to raise them in these respects is being bitterly opposed by the Swarajists, behind whom are the brahmin priests and the higher castes. The severing of the British connexion means the establishment of the inhuman rule that, in the older days, deprived the people of education, submerged them in a morass of the grossest superstition, and ground down millions (the Depressed Classes) to the depths of sub-human degradation.

The establishment of Swaraj would mean the setting up of an oligarchy composed of the brahmin and the next highest castes, working through a purely caste-monopolised bureaucracy. Thus, a "Namasudra," writing in one of the Calcutta papers, said: "The rights and powers transferred will be abused by the so-called leaders of the country, and it will be an oppressive rule of the aristocratic people of India who have practically no sympathy with the lower castes." By "aristocratic people," he meant, of course, the brahmins, who are the real roots of unrest. Their motive is not progress, nor liberty, nor enlightenment, but the very reverse, coupled with the domination of the priestly caste.

The benefits which India has derived from British administration are incalculable. It would be a tragedy indeed if these should be destroyed by precisely those very same influences which brought about the decline and fall of the Hindus from their former greatness, so that they became an easy prey to the Mohammedans.

Something of the same kind will happen again in the near future, unless the British Government, here at Home, can be brought to understand the real inwardness of Swaraj; that the unrest in India is not a spontaneous, popular movement, but an agitation engineered by a few unscrupulous and ambitious men who seek to replace the British for their own personal gain and enrichment; and that, behind it all, there lurks the sinister shadow of the brahmin priestcraft.

CHAPTER XI

THE IRRECONCILABLES

Extremist Demands—A Gigantic Bluff—India for the Brahmins—Where We are to Blame—An Impossible Ideal—"Back to the Vedas"—Mr. Gandhi's March—League of Nations Proposal—Swaraj and Communism—Playing with Fire.

THE situation in British India is without parallel in the history of nations.

Here we have a small body of men who call themselves the All-India Congress Party, but who do not represent anyone, or anything, except themselves and their own personal interests. They do not represent the seventy millions of Mohammedans, nor the eleven millions of Buddhists (Burma), nor the fifty millions of Outcasts, nor the Anglo-Indians, nor the Indian Christians, and certainly not the Europeans whose stake in the country is immeasurably greater than that of the whole of the Swarajists put together. They are not even representative of the Hindus, for the majority of these have never heard of them. They are just a few caste Hindus, with a following of less than half a million all told. Yet they have reduced the Government of the British Empire, and the Government of India, to a state of trepidation and uncertainty!

This is the Party, or, rather, group, which is agitating for Swaraj, and, going a step further, demands

that the British Raj shall abdicate in its favour, so that it may establish itself as the Governing Power of all India, independent of the British Empire. Thus, the Calcutta City Council, wholly dominated by Swarajists elected on a communal basis, decided to fly the Indian Nationalist flag on all public buildings, on January 25, 1930, and on all future ceremonial occasions. The Mayor, Mr. Sen Gupta, said that it was in obedience to the order of the National Congress which demands the cutting off of India from the British Empire. "The Union Jack is an affront to the national honour of India," said the Mayor. If the British Government were to put its little finger gently down, this ridiculous and disloyal Party would be obliterated without the slightest exertion. Is the elephant scared out of its wits by a mouse?

When we look at the people who compose this Party we are amused at the extreme impudence of their demands; or would be, were it not that they seem to be taken seriously by the Government.

Who, then, are these Swarajists whose declared intention it is, first, to drive the British out of India, and then to make the warlike Indian princes come to heel and submit to their dictation? Most of them are Bengalis who have availed themselves of the educational facilities which we, the British, have placed at their disposal. Many are lawyers, and the greater part of the rank and file are students and schoolboys, as becomes evident whenever disturbances take place.

The leaders of the Swaraj Party enter the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils, and they control the Indian Press, with the exception of such journals as are under British management.

They are able to express themselves in English, through their newspapers, by means of books and pamphlets, and on the public platform. Their writings and speeches are communicated to the Press in England, where more importance is attached to them than they deserve, and thus they succeed in making the British public believe that they really are "The Voice of India." They have put up a gigantic bluff, which, so far, seems to have worked! It would be laughable were it not for the grave consequences that might come of their agitation.

It was hoped that the introduction of the Reforms, the establishment of the Legislative Assembly, and the Councils, under the Act of 1919, would provide the elected representatives (albeit of very small constituencies) with an opportunity of trying their hands as rulers and administrators. It was thought that, by taking them into active partnership, they would work in harmony with us for the greater benefit of India as a whole.

But the elections were run on communal lines, Hindus *versus* Mohammedans, and the Hindus, being the more numerous, gained the larger number of seats. Then the Hindus, Swarajist almost to a man, lost no opportunity of displaying their antagonism to the British. They did all they could to make government impossible, and would have done so had the Viceroy and the Governors not been provided with powers to over-rule them. They succeeded in only one thing, the demonstration of their own incapacity and irresponsibility. This was no more than was expected by those who understood Indian conditions and the Hindu mentality.

Swaraj is generally supposed to mean Home Rule for India. Actually it means self-rule, and, as

interpreted by the Hindus, it is on all fours with anarchism, refusal to submit to any rule save that of one's own personal desires, impulses or interests. There is no idea whatsoever of Home Rule for India in the Swaraj movement. Its object is simply *India for the brahmins*. At root it is a conspiracy to check the development of modern civilisation in India, in order that the caste system, and all its attendant evils, may be perpetuated in the interests of the higher castes. In practice it would mean a Hindu caste oligarchy dominated by the brahmins. Of this fact the Mohammedans are well aware, and thus they have dissociated themselves from Swaraj.

If a sentimental Socialist Government were to grant Swaraj, as understood by the Congress Party, the Mohammedans would refuse to accept it, and we would then have another, and a more formidable, problem presented to us. If it were to go a step further—for there is no knowing what a British Government is capable of nowadays—and withdraw the British troops, a Swaraj Government would not last three months, and such of the Swarajists as remained alive would be screaming for the British to go back and save them from the consequences of their own folly.

But, say the Extremists, we will be satisfied with nothing else. Has there ever been a situation in history quite so ridiculous?

There are some people who regard the position in India as analogous with that of Southern Ireland. It is not so. In India there is no *popular* demand for Home Rule. The mass of the people were perfectly content with British rule as it was. It has been described as a "pathetic contentment," but how, or why, contentment should be pathetic has

never been explained. Conditions were, and are, gradually improving, and the reasons why progress is slow have been given in the foregoing pages. Our object in granting extended powers of self-government was to assist the development of popular, democratic government so that progress might be accelerated. But the Swaraj movement is not, and never has been, inspired by any such motive.

In the course of many conversations with Swarajists I became aware of two distinct views, or rather hopes, one of which is laudable enough in its way, and the other quite impossible. Incidentally I may say that I never met any Swarajist who favoured the withdrawal of British troops, though that would follow as a matter of course if India were granted complete independence. We are, it seems, to hand everything over to the Swarajists to deal with as they please, and to keep order whilst they do it! This is only another instance of the naïveté of the Indian mind.

The average young Indian with a more or less English education, whether a graduated or a failed B.A., has only one ambition. It is to obtain an appointment under Government. This is why Mr. Gandhi's appeal to those already so employed to resign has fallen on deaf ears, with the exception of a few village headmen who will probably get their jobs back when Mr. Gandhi has passed, on the grounds that there was a "mistake." Nor will the lawyers with practices boycott the law courts.

If we could insure all Swarajists Government jobs there would be no Swaraj! But there are not enough to go round, any more than there is room for all the lawyers. It is thought that, if the British officials can be got rid of, their places will be filled by

Indians. Furthermore, if a Government consisting of Hindus were established, many more openings would be provided. This view I have actually heard expressed in all seriousness. What might happen afterwards was not thought of.

Here, indeed, we British are to blame, in educating so many young men on Western lines without thought of whether they will be able to find employment afterwards. A good many are employed in offices by British firms, but these also are limited in number. There might be, and doubtless are, openings in engineering and other trades. But there are objections, partly on caste grounds, and partly because the educated Indian has a rooted aversion for anything involving manual work, even in the apprenticeship stages, although practically certain to lead to something more important. Give him a stool in an office, a pen, ink, and a set of books to keep, or clerical work to do, and he is satisfied. This may be extremely stupid from our Western point of view, but there it is! This is one of the causes of irreconcilability.

The second cause is more in the nature of an ideal, wholly reactionary and impracticable. Mr. Gandhi is its leading exponent. The slogan is "Back to the Vedas!" that is to say, back to conditions as they were before ever a European had appeared in the land. I found, on discussing this, that what was meant was not the Mogul period, but some time anterior to it. Then it was that I discovered how little the average Hindu knows of the history of his own country. Myth and legend, plenty of these, but not actual history.

Few were aware of the identity of the Emperor Asoka, and of the splendid contribution to Indian thought of the Buddha Gotama. The latter was

regarded as an *avatar* (incarnation) of the god Vishnu, an invention of the brahmin priests which would have filled the Buddha with disgust. But there was no knowledge of his teaching. But for European scholarship, it is doubtful whether that wonderful period of Indian history would ever have been known.

Back to the Vedas? Back to the time *before* the brahmin priestcraft had blighted the whole Indo-Aryan race, and established the caste system which degraded millions of them from civilisation to barbarism, and other millions of non-Aryans to the sub-human. That might, perhaps, be desirable, but it is impossible. We, in England, might as well aspire to go back to the Druids. Modern civilisation is to-day world-wide; there can be no turning back in India or anywhere else. India cannot keep out of its influence. If the British Empire were to break up, and England sink to the position of a third-class Power, bereft of all her overseas possessions, some other nation would step into India, probably less tolerant, less magnanimous, less desirous of helping the Indian peoples to "find" themselves.

Apart from all the froth of Swarajist verbiage, overweighted as it is with grotesque falsehood, it cannot be denied that the British have done well by India, as far as the Indians themselves will permit. As Dr. Fischerauer, the Austrian Consul-General in New York, wrote in the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* of March 14, 1930, after a visit to India:

> In former times the Indians lived in a condition of miserable slavery, but since the British brought order into India they have been comparatively well off. The motto of *Pax Britannica* has perhaps never had such complete justification as in India.

That was no more than a just tribute, and the British would have accomplished much more but for the opposition of the Indians themselves. We even welcomed Swaraj in its earlier manifestations, but it now stands out, definitely and unmistakably, as a movement directed *against* progress and civilisation in India, and the latest turn given to it by Mr. Gandhi is significant of much.

The salt tax is not, in itself, an imposition. It amounts only to about two and a half annas a year on the average income. Other taxes on the people are almost all on goods imported from abroad, and they have been imposed by the Indian members of the Legislative Assembly. The reason for singling out salt as an example of British "extortion" was the opportunity afforded for a spectacular march in order to try and stir up the countryside, and also for the purposes of advertisement. I do not believe the idea originated with Mr. Gandhi himself, but that it was suggested by those behind the scenes in whose hands he is no more than a puppet. It is interesting to note that Mr. Gandhi confined his march to British territory, avoiding Baroda. They do things better in the Indian States!

One of Mr. Gandhi's admirers told me that the real object of Swaraj, and of non-co-operation, was the revival of Hinduism in all such forms as existed before the British intervened. It is intended, if they can manage to stir up a successful revolution, to expel from India everything savouring of Western civilisation: railways, electricity, telegraphs, irrigation works, modern machinery; schools, universities, hospitals, and all other institutions run on Western lines. I had described to me the beauties of the "simple life" as it might be lived in India, if only

European "materialism" could be driven out. Get rid of European influence and the "golden age" will come again. The gods will see to it. It was because the Hindus had been unfaithful to the Vedas that they were ground under the heels of foreign conquerors.

This was a good example of the religious fanaticism that inspires much of the Swaraj agitation. Another was afforded on March 11, 1930, when it was announced that smallpox had broken out in Mr. Gandhi's *ashram* (the schoolhouse where he was staying). He said that he had received a communication from his "inner voice" that it was irreligious to be vaccinated, for this was tantamount to eating cow's flesh. He would adhere to his faith, even if the whole *ashram* were carried off.

Again, when asked what he thought of the Viceroy's reply to his "ultimatum," indicating that the Government must take steps to protect society, Mr. Gandhi was reported to have replied: "I do not think anything at all. My thought is paralysed, or, rather, I have deliberately stopped myself from thinking of such hypothetical consequences. Red ruin, a revolution, the breaking-up of laws, would be preferable to the present state of affairs, for these disasters happen to us every day in the name of government and public order."

The effort has failed, but the irreconcilables are still there, and will now endeavour to devise some other means of attaining their ends. What needs to be clearly understood in this country is that there are a few personally ambitious men whose aim is the overthrow of British rule in India, and that nothing in the way of concession or forbearance will placate them; nothing whatsoever that may be offered from the British side will be accepted. They are, in

themselves, a negligible quantity which could easily be disposed of without causing the slightest trouble in India. But—here are our sentimentalists who seem determined that they *will* have trouble.

It has been suggested that the Indian question might be submitted to an independent court. Thus, in *The Nineteenth Century and After* for October, 1929, there appeared an article by Mr. Arthur Davies, entitled "'Swaraj' and the League of Nations." It is worth consideration because the same idea has occurred to others, and has been put forward by certain of the Swarajists.

Mr. Davies argues for an appeal to the League of Nations as a means of arriving at a settlement of the present difficulty in the British Provinces of India. But he gives his whole case away when he warns the "simple-minded" that the term "India" is used by him "to denote political-minded, vocal India—English-educated India." This is, precisely, Swaraj India, and he might have added for the further information of the simple-minded that it represents only an infinitesimal part of India. We have to do here, not with the many millions of the inhabitants who neither know, nor care, anything about Swaraj, but with a very few men chiefly located in the great cities. These are the irreconcilables.

Doubtless, as Mr. Davies says, the demand for Swaraj is widespread in the sense that it is found in places far apart, and that an understanding of it is the first step to the comprehension of India's problem. The demand, then, is made by a few English-educated Indians, and one of their objects is to oust the British from every official and governmental position in the country, and to take over these—with the emoluments—themselves. This is the first consideration,

and the only one with most of the adherents of the Swaraj Party. The second, Mr. Davies does not stress, although he refers to the effect of English education in wakening that great country out of its mediæval torpor, and setting up what we may summarise as modern thought.

I have already referred to modern thought as a challenge to the age-old religious beliefs and social institutions of India, constituting a threat to, and a possible solvent of, the caste system which is India's greatest curse. The parallel to the situation thus arising I showed in a previous chapter, when I described the brahmin intrigue against Buddhism, culminating in the active persecution and suppression of it in India. The reason for that movement was precisely the same as for the present-day agitation against the British.

In this view of the problem, nothing that Great Britain can suggest or offer, short of evacuation of the country, can solve it; unless we make up our minds, as the Ruling Power, to stand no more nonsense, definitely to assert ourselves, and to govern accordingly. In this we would have the active assistance (if we needed it) of the Moslem community and the Indian States. But the vacillating policy of the Government is interpreted by the Swaraj element as weakness; they openly proclaim that the British are afraid, and weakness and fear in the East are heralds of disaster.

Mr. Davies says that the broad demand is that they (the Hindus) shall no longer be ruled by foreigners. But when were they not ruled by foreigners? Possibly in the earliest days when, as Aryan immigrants, they were themselves foreigners. There came the Greeks, the Kushans, the Mohammedans, and finally

the Aryan British, who have as much right to be in India as the Hindus. And, after the British, if we are foolish enough to abdicate of our own accord—who? The Russians? The Japanese? The Maharajadhiraja of Burdwan put it very plainly when he said, in the course of a speech in London, in 1928:

"If India is tired of white rule, and if the British be tired of ruling India, then India must be prepared either to be ruled by the yellow races, or by those races whose religion is other than Hinduism, or by Soviet Russia."

Certain it is that the Hindus, split up as they are into mutually exclusive castes, entirely unsympathetic towards each other, only united in one thing, slavish subservience to the brahmin priests, could not govern British India. One of two things would happen, if neither the Russians nor the Japanese invaded the country: the Mohammedans would re-establish their ascendancy; or one or other, or a confederation, of the Indian States would subdue what are now the British Provinces. In any case, it would mean long-continued warfare and bloodshed, in the course of which the Hindu Swarajists would be wiped out of existence.

Mr. Davies tells us that India is greatly annoyed when Great Britain speaks of the Hindu-Mohammedan antagonism, because she believes that secretly, if not openly, Great Britain fosters that antagonism on the "divide and rule" principle. But it is not *India* that is annoyed or believes this. The Hindu Swarajists say so, well knowing it to be a lie.

The *Hindu* of Madras is quoted.

"The people of Great Britain has not a joint voice with us in the exercise of our God-given and inalienable right of self-determination or sovereignty . . ."

What is meant by this? Which of the multitude of Hindu deities gave any such right? If it comes to a question of original occupation of the country, what right had the Aryan invaders to encroach upon the aborigines?—and by what right do they treat the descendants of those aborigines as outcastes, reducing them to slavery, treating them like beasts, and creating what are known as the criminal tribes? If these Hindus had a God-given right to occupy the country, may not we, as white Aryans of a higher civilisation and culture, advance the same argument?

Mr. Davies says:

"One particularly bright hope . . . is furnished by a growing sense in Great Britain, and among many responsible Britons in India, that no solution can be afforded from Westminster."

Probably not, as "Westminster" is now constituted, and this observation throws into relief the fact that democracy is a term wholly without meaning in India. Swaraj would mean, not democracy, not an extension of popular rights and liberties, but domination of the British Provinces by a small class, an oligarchy, a "Vakil Raj," chiefly composed of Bengali lawyers and their like. How long would it last? No longer than the Mohammedans or the neighbouring Indian States permitted, which might be a few months, after which the lawyers would be in process of having their throats cut.

It is true also, as Mr. Davies remarks, that whatever solution comes from Britain will insure its rejection, not by *India*, as he supposes, but by the Swarajist minority which forms the nettle to be grasped. "There are clouds ahead," he adds. There are, indeed, and there is no way to avoid a storm

save to rule the country as it has always been accustomed to be ruled, and will be ruled again if we leave, namely, dictation by the paramount power. If we are squeamish about this, if it offends our ideas of democracy, then we had better get out, and leave the Indians to weather the storm as best they can.

A reference to the League of Nations was suggested by Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachari, a leading Swarajist. He doubtless hopes that the League of Nations—composed mostly of foreigners who know nothing of India—would give the Swarajists all they ask. But why should we submit such a question to a tribunal which could not possibly understand it? It might grant the whole Swaraj demand, namely, that Great Britain should hand over the Government to them. In this case we should have to clear out, and it would be simpler, and more dignified, for us to abandon India of our own accord and have done with it.

"There is no doubt that a serious rupture between India, with its population of 300,000,000, and Great Britain would be most disturbing to the whole world,"

says Mr. Davies. But there is no likelihood of such a rupture if the politicians at Westminster can be brought to understand what Swaraj really means.

It cannot be too often repeated that *the vast masses of the Indian peoples know little, and care less, about Swaraj.* Those who do know anything, and who think at all, are aware that they are better off under the just and impartial rule of British officials than they would be under the tyranny of the superior castes, for this is what Swaraj would mean. The "rupture" has occurred already, with the Swarajists, and we should accept their challenge with the same determination

that they have flung it in our faces. If these irreconcilables are allowed to stir up and incite the fanaticism of the illiterate multitude to a state of rebellion, the blame will attach to the British Government, and to no one else.

The proposal of Mr. Davies would seem to be that of a lawyer. It is all in the nature of a compromise beloved of lawyers, of lawyer-politicians especially. It would be a final confession of weakness. It would also involve "a policy of scuttle." The world is not "one," as Mr. Davies imagines. It is not even one nation in India; and it is not for India that the Swarajists have any right to speak. Unfortunately, few people in England realise this.

If, for the purposes of the League of Nations' deliberations, the Government of India were to nominate only such representatives to the League as were properly elected, how would the election be carried out, and on what basis? Of whom would the representation consist? Of what proportions of Mohammedans and Hindus, and what castes of the latter? What of the Buddhists of Burma? These, certainly, would demand separation from India, as they do now. Would there be delegates from the Untouchables? Would the Indian States be invited, for the constitution of the adjoining territories is of vital importance to them? I think Mr. Davies has not considered all the difficulties.

He suggests a League Commission going out to India, to include an American, a German, and a Swede! Why not also an Esquimau, a South Sea Islander, and a Hottentot? I mean no disrespect, but these last would be quite as capable of arriving at a solution. Such a Commission would, doubtless, afford satisfaction to "statesmen" of the calibre

of Lord Olivier, Secretary of State for India in the Labour Government of 1924, who declared: "I am glad that the British Empire is being broken up and internationalised, because I am not an Imperialist." But would it satisfy the British public? Would it satisfy the peoples of India, apart from the small Swarajist "cell"? It certainly would not!

Mr. Davies says one very true thing. It is that Imperialism, in its bad, old sense, has few advocates. I take it that it has none in England. British Imperialism is something entirely different, and its aim in India is to try and bring the Indian peoples on a level with the rest of the civilised world. But the Swarajists will have none of it. Their common epithet for civilisation is "satanic."

Such being the situation, there is no need to bring the League of Nations in at all. It might gain time, it might keep things going more or less as they are for a few years, but the same demand would come up again in the end, namely, that Great Britain should abdicate in favour of a minority of Hindus who do not, in any sense, represent the peoples of India.

Mr. Davies thinks India might accept from the League of Nations what she will not accept from Great Britain. What is that? He does not make it clear. If it were favourable to Great Britain, *the Swarajists*—India does not come into this question—would certainly not accept it, and the situation would remain as it was before.

We have to face one salient fact fairly and squarely. It is that the Swarajists are irreconcilable, and that they are prepared to work with, or make use of, any violent or anti-British elements likely to further their aims. This is illustrated by their attitude towards

the Communist conspiracy that has been going on in India since 1919.

The Russian Communists have declared that Great Britain is the first enemy to be overthrown before the great world-wide revolution, which they are engineering, can be got under way. The most vulnerable point of attack they believe to be India, and they think so on account of the Swaraj movement.

There is, in Russia, a notorious Hindu revolutionary with whom certain of the Swarajists have been in communication, both before and since the Cawnpore conspiracy case of 1924, when it was proved that the accused had received advice and instructions from him, on behalf of the Communist International, together with promises of armed assistance.

An epidemic of riots and acts of sabotage followed, culminating in the wrecking of trains, involving serious loss of life. The worst of these outrages was the disaster on the East India Railway near Calcutta, in 1928, when a rail was removed from the line, causing the death of 17 Indian passengers and the European engine-driver, and serious injury to many others. A Swarajist paper thereupon took the opportunity of publishing a characteristic lie in the form of a letter alleging that Europeans had been seen murdering injured Indians.

There is no doubt that these outrages were the result of incitements on the part of Communist agents, some of whom were known to be foreigners, not British Indians or British subjects. The Government therefore introduced the Public Safety (Removal from India) Bill. The Swarajists, acting true to form, bitterly opposed the Bill and secured its rejection. Their speeches exhibited the usual banality, one member of the Assembly referring to the Bolshevists

as "worthy people who were animated by a laudable desire to improve the world."*

At Lahore, on January 14, 1930, it was stated that "a secret murder meeting" had been held in the old fort of Delhi, by the Indian Revolutionary Committee, and that this Committee had undertaken to issue arms for political robberies, and murders, and to receive the monetary proceeds from such crimes. That looks like thuggee up-to-date! Then, when the Government sought powers to restrain this kind of thing, and to deport undesirable aliens, the fatuous Swarajists talked of "tyranny"! We may well ask the question how far the leaders of Swaraj are hand in glove with the Communists when we recall that Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, *a brahmin*, son of the leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly, has recently been in Russia; and that, in moving a resolution at a meeting of the Congress, he addressed the delegates as "comrades."

There is no likelihood that Communism, antagonistic as it is to all forms of religion, will ever make headway in India. Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, as a brahmin, is well aware of this, and his pose before the Congress was no more sincere than that of "Citizen" Tipu, when he sought the aid of the French Republic a hundred years ago. The brahmins, who are making another bid for predominance through the Swaraj movement, have no use for Russian Communism. They would be the first to oppose the setting up of soviets by the workers and peasants, for this would mean an uprising of the lower castes, not only against the British, but against the higher castes of the Hindus. This, however, *is* the declared aim of the Communist International.

* J. E. Woolacott: *India on Trial*.

"Mass action" as defined by it, is to take the form of "agrarian strikes, food riots, the plunder of corn stocks, and assaults upon large estates, peasant revolts," and so forth. These and other similar activities are to be directed quite as much against the propertied and well-to-do classes of Indians as against the European capitalists. There can be no doubt that, in coquetting with Communism, the Swarajists are playing with fire. The "Red" Press expresses what the Communists think of the leaders of the Swaraj party when it denounces them as "bourgeois reactionaries," in which estimate it is undoubtedly correct!

Such is the absurdly tangled state of affairs in British India. What does the Government propose to do about it? Allow the irreconcilables and the impossibilists to foment more trouble? Or will it put down its finger gently—very gently? India would not be disturbed in the least. It would only mean the restoration of peace and quietude, and a resumption of the policy of orderly progress.

CHAPTER XII

WANTED—A POLICY

Our Duty to India—Dominion Status?—An Impossibility—Round Table Conference—We Must Rule—First Steps—Increasing Prosperity—Suggestions for a Policy—The I.C.S.—"Augean Stables"—Segregate the Swarajists—The Alternative.

THE question which we, British Aryans, are called upon to decide is whether we shall remain in India or clear out of the country. If we decide to remain, the British Raj must be paramount. The experiment of the diarchy has proved a disastrous failure. There can be no divided authority.

If our Home politicians cannot be brought to realise this, then they will go on from one blunder to another until they precipitate a catastrophe which will either be irremediable, or will, in any case, cost hundreds of thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of money. Unfortunately, warnings by those who know are seldom regarded by those who do not, and the latter usually have the final decision in the matter. This we had illustrated during the ten years, and more, before 1914.

But it is our duty to the peoples of India, if not to ourselves, to see to it that nothing of the kind occurs. If it does, ours will be the blame, and we shall deserve to lose, not only India, but the whole Empire, and to suffer for the crime of our nonfeasance. It will have

been due to our failure to rule firmly and fearlessly. In India a firm hand is expected, otherwise the Raj must go, to be replaced by one that possesses it.

Our mistake has been in trying to graft upon a social order, 500 years behind our own, a twentieth-century constitution. That it would not work was evident from the beginning, yet there are still many among our politicians who cannot see it even now. Despite all that has occurred during the past few years, a very unwise half-promise has been made that India shall be granted Dominion Status, which, to all intents and purposes, is equivalent to independence. It means control by the Dominion (which, in the case of India, would mean the Swarajists) of internal administration, communications, and the maintenance of order; control of the fiscal arrangements; the conduct, within certain limits, of its own foreign affairs; and the organisation and maintenance of its own defences against foreign aggression.

If one thing has been fully demonstrated, it is that the Swarajists are incapable of any of these things. Thus Dominion Status for India is the statement of an impossibility, for it demands, in the first instance, unity within the Dominion itself. But, as the Aga Khan said some time ago: "In India no such union as is essential to the creation of a strong, independent, homogeneous State is possible without centuries of consolidation. Even if we assume that the forces tending to unification are quickened by the machinery of modern civilisation, generations must pass before India is a nation."

It is obvious that the essential differences between Canada or Australia, and India, and the categories to which their respective peoples belong, are not realised by those who talk so glibly of Dominion

Status for India. The inhabitants of Canada and of Australia consist almost entirely of one race, already accustomed to self-government; they are nearly all of the same religion, speaking the same language, and, in the main, capable of appreciating such national questions as may be presented to them, and of voting upon them with understanding. Such is not the case in the British Provinces of India. They are divided by religious, caste, racial and linguistic differences, in a manner and to an extent hardly imaginable by the stay-at-home Britisher.

How could any Province be arranged into constituencies which would be fairly representative? How would the issues of an election be framed so as to be fully understood by all the constituents, the majority of whom are wholly illiterate? On what basis would the franchise rest? A property qualification, as now, or one man one vote? No political machinery could be devised which would answer to the scores of divided and conflicting interests, and the thousand and one cross-currents of thought, many of them so strange and fantastic as to be utterly beyond the ken of any British Parliamentary candidate! What he is accustomed to in England would not work in India.

Dominion Status would not mean a popular election and subsequent government in the interests of the country and the people. None know this better than the Swarajists. It would mean the turning over of the British Provinces to a handful of Hindu irreconcilables who would, at once, reduce them to a state of chaos. It would mean every man for himself in pursuit of the spoils, and the utter ruin of everything that the British have accomplished during the last two hundred years. These men have given us so

many illustrations of their incapacity and irresponsibility that even the most obtuse-minded person in this country should see the madness of allowing anything of the kind.

What the finding of the Simon Commission will be is unknown at this moment of writing. But it is safe to prophesy that it will be hysterically denounced by the Swarajists. If it is accepted by all British political parties, so much the better. The real nature of Swaraj will become evident. It is understood that, after the Report has been presented, a Round Table Conference is to be convened, at which will be represented as many of the different phases of Indian thought as possible. This also is to the good, for it will then be discovered that there is a sane, balanced body of opinion really representative of India. Whether the Swarajists boycott the Conference, or whether they decide to be present, they will illustrate, far better than I can, their true character, and the real nature of their aims.

It will be found that, if we are to deal rightly and justly by India, *we* must rule, and the only way to do so is by some form of dictatorship. The trouble of late years has been that we have had no definite policy. The Reforms contained none. They were merely by way of an experiment, to see whether a policy might be evolved out of them, and we have discovered that it cannot. If we do not care to assume the responsibility of a dictatorship, and still determine to hand over India to the Indians, they will speedily establish one, and it will not be that of the Swarajist Congress Party.

Should we, however, decide to continue in India, then we should never forget the fact that we also are Aryans, of the same race as that from which the

majority of the Indian peoples, the Hindus, are descended. But, whereas we have kept our caste (*varna*—colour) pure, theirs has become so mixed that it is no longer recognisable in its original sense and application. The existing caste system bears no relation whatever to caste in the true meaning of the term. It is simply an artificial division of the people into categories by the brahmin priestcraft, in order that they might be brought into a state of subjection and servitude. We should, therefore, emphasise the fact that *our* caste is superior even to the brahmins whenever this question is brought to the fore; and, by right of our Aryan caste and ancestry we do rule, and will rule, in India. We shall rule, not in the interests of this or that particular caste, class, or nationality, or even of ourselves, but of all peoples alike, without discrimination and without fear or favour.

Our determination is to bring India abreast of the world-civilisation, even though it cannot be done in one generation, perhaps not in ten. Our desire is to see India free, great, powerful, rich, and her people as they were at their best, before they were reduced to the condition in which we found them.

The first step should be the further advancement of the material prosperity of the masses of the people who are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The welfare of the ryot, who is entirely neglected by the town-bred Indian politicians, should be our chief consideration. We have already begun this work, and it is proving successful. It is true that the general standard of living is lower than it ought to be, but it is unquestionably improving. The statement that the average monthly income is about three rupees (4s. 6d.) is untrue. Even unskilled labour is paid much more.

That the agriculturists are, on the whole, better off, is shown by the fact that, during recent periods of scarcity (which, incidentally, have been less widespread), fewer persons have found it necessary to fall back on the relief works. But one thing *must* be done. It is the checking of the rapacity of the moneylending class.

The second important consideration is education. So far we have been held back, not by lack of inclination, or by considerations of cost, but simply on account of the susceptibilities of the people themselves. Always in the background is the brahmin priest, determined to stop the spread of popular education if he can, and strengthening the existing prejudice against it. This opposition must be swept aside, with a ruthless disregard of the Hindu religion if necessary, just as we ignored it in the case of suttee and thuggee. The purpose of education should be, among other things, the eradication of those injurious superstitions which have proved the main obstacle to progress. Particularly should it be directed against the caste system, for, until this is got rid of, there is no hope of India ever becoming a civilised country. The form of education should not slavishly follow the English model, as it does to-day. The worst of pedagogues is that they seldom have any imagination, and this is why so much of the curriculum of the schools and colleges in India is stupid. It should be adapted to Indian conditions, and framed with a due regard to the peculiarities of the Indian mentality. In the country districts, as everywhere else, the manner in which the majority of the scholars will have to earn their livelihood should be taken into consideration. It is not so at present, even in the schools of England.

As regards the growing prosperity of the Indian

peoples referred to above, the Indian Taxation Inquiry of 1924-25, the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance of 1925-26, and the Royal Commission on Agriculture in India of 1926-1928, have established the fact that actual wages in India have been steadily increasing during the past fifteen years. In the course of the last half century India's exports have increased sevenfold, and her imports eightfold. The extensive irrigation and reclamation schemes, initiated and carried out *by the British*, have developed enormous areas of cultivated land, and are capable of extension to a degree that would go far to obviating the danger of famine, or even remove it altogether.

We have been accused by the Swarajists of destroying "native industries" by the establishment of factories and other works on European lines. But the fact is just the contrary, as might be expected when the Swarajist makes a statement. Cottage and home industries and handicrafts, in which Indians excel, are increasing to a marked degree. The great machine industries (which Mr. Gandhi would abolish) not only have injured nothing, but they provide employment to many thousands of people, and have increased the volume of India's export trade by many hundreds of millions of rupees annually. These industries will be greatly extended if security to capital is assured by the establishment of a stable Government.

Are we to allow all this to be destroyed by a handful of malcontents, whose only ambition is to enrich themselves out of the ruin of the country? Are the future prosperity and happiness of 300 millions of people to be reversed for the temporary benefit of less than half a million? Are they to be thrown back

into the state of slavery, poverty and misery, out of which we lifted them, at the behest of the brahmin caste?

All this will come about if we persist in the crazy scheme of trying to foist "democracy" upon a country that does not want it and will not have it—at least not for many generations yet to come? Swaraj should mean democracy, but the only hope of its growth in India is under British tutelage *which must begin with a dictatorship.*

That is the issue. The following suggestions, therefore, are not those of a reactionary, but of one who believes in the inevitability of development, of change in all things; that it is not possible long to remain in the conditions of the present, certainly not to retrace our steps back to the past. This is one of the reasons why I am an opponent of Swaraj in its present form, because it is reactionary, and the implacable enemy of every idea of progress and reform.

The first thing that must be done is to repeal the Government of India Act of 1919, and to abolish the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils established by that Act.

The second is the appointment of a Viceroy with dictatorial powers, and the extension of a large measure of such powers to the Provincial Governors; and their terms of office should be for a much longer period than at present. The Viceroy and the Governors should nominate their own Councils, the appointments being confirmed by the Home Government. The Viceroy, or the Governor-General in Council, should be the supreme authority; and the Governors equally so in the Provinces, subject only to the Viceroy.

The Councils should consist of British and Indians, their relative numbers to be determined by the

Viceroy and the Governors themselves. They might, conceivably, consist of a majority of Indians, if sufficient could be found prepared to place the country first, and religion, caste and personal considerations out of sight altogether. There are such men in India, but, unfortunately, they are all too few.

Below these Councils there should be Subordinate Councils consisting of elected members. But their function should be advisory only. Their recommendations might, or might not, be accepted by the higher Councils in which alone should be vested the administrative and executive authority. The higher Councils should have the power of dismissing individual members of the Subordinate Councils, or of dissolving them altogether if they display such animus as the Swarajists habitually do. By this means the people would be gradually led to an understanding of representation and the electoral method, and the representatives would be unable to use politics as an instrument either of sedition or for the advancement of their own personal interests.

As regards administration, it should be more direct and personal. Anyone, having a good reason, should be able to approach the Governor, whose position would be actually that of Raja; or even the Viceroy, who would be second only to the Emperor himself. It is related that the Mogul Emperor, Jahangir, had a chain hanging down to the ground, attached to a golden bell in his private apartment, so that anyone demanding justice might communicate with him direct. It is not recorded what happened to anyone who rang it without sufficient cause!

I believe that, theoretically, such access to the Governor, or even to the Viceroy, is permissible now. But the difficulty is getting past the underlings, who,

in the first place, are Indians who will keep the petitioner away from the Lat Sahib unless a sufficient bribe is forthcoming. The Viceroy and the Governors are certainly handicapped in seldom being able to obtain direct information, unless, indeed, they play the part of Haroun-al-Raschid, as I am told the late Lord Curzon occasionally did. It may be said that the Governor would soon have nothing else to do; but all requests of this nature could be considered in the first place by a European official whose special job it would be, without any babu being allowed to intervene.

The Indian Civil Service is the most wonderful service of the kind in the world, or was until "Indianisation" came into vogue. It was the character of the splendid men who composed it, and still do to a smaller extent, their high integrity, their direct truthfulness, their sense of justice and fair play, their courage and resourcefulness, that won over the confidence of the Indian peoples to the British Raj. That their numbers should have been so reduced, that their powers should have been curtailed, and especially that they should be made subordinate to Indians, often of the babu type, is a wrong policy, a misfortune, both for India and for the prestige of the British.

The personnel of the Indian Civil Service should be increased so that there is no district which has not a British officer within easy reach throughout the length and breadth of the land. The main requirement of every such appointment should be that the British official is, above all things, a *sahib*, a gentleman, and that he should possess an adequate conversational knowledge of the vernacular. It should be his business to get into personal touch with the village

councils and with the people, and he should transmit such of their opinions, and other information, as appear of importance, to the proper authority. The curse of the Indian Government is bureaucracy; it needs to be more human. In this manner a direct relationship between the people of India and the British Raj would be established. The machinations of seditious emissaries would be circumvented, and any incipient unrest pacified at the outset.

As regards the municipalities of the large cities, they form a series of "Augean stables" of corruption and mismanagement which all the waters of the Ganges could not cleanse! They need reforming out of existence. Even more than the Legislative Assembly and the Provincial Councils, they stand as horrible examples of Swarajist incompetence. If an illustration is required of the failure of elected representation in India, we have only to consider the Corporation of Calcutta!

In this connection the electoral system might be continued, but the candidates should first be approved by the Governor and his Council; and, after election, they should be liable to suspension or dismissal, individually or collectively, under certain circumstances. There would be no more such exhibitions as occurred in Calcutta with the "national flag."

The Swarajists should be told, firmly and in unmistakable language, that we do not intend to tolerate any more of their nonsense. These bold Bengalis who talk so bravely of taking up the sword, of throwing the British into the sea, and killing 50,000 of them —they should be made to understand that, if Great Britain chose to do it, she could flick them off the face of the earth without the slightest effort.

If they boycott the Government, the Government

should boycott them. In a word, they should be outlawed. They should be deprived of all civic rights, disqualified from holding any public post, from appearing as plaintiffs or witnesses, or (if lawyers) from practising in any court of law, until they gave suitable assurance of good behaviour. The Swarajists appear to be strong because they are nearly all together in the cities, where they are able to organise. They are dangerous because of the political murder gangs, by which they intimidate and coerce large numbers of people who would, if left to themselves, prefer to remain quiet, into taking part in *hartals*, and in public demonstrations against the Government. These assemblies result, whenever the Swarajists desire, in rioting and bloodshed whilst the instigators keep out of the danger zone.

If less than twenty men, whom I could name, were deported for the rest of their natural lives, with a warning issued that others would follow if necessary, the seditious Swaraj movement would collapse like a house of cards, and the prestige of the British Raj would be again firmly established throughout India. As things are, it is by way of being despised, and for this we have only ourselves to thank.

All this sounds like repression. So it may be, but it must be remembered that we have to deal with men who themselves exercise coercion. They would not be tolerated in the Indian States, or in the Dutch or the French Eastern dependencies, for five minutes. We never hear of them causing trouble in French Pondicherry, or Chrandanagore (near Calcutta), or in Portuguese Goa. There have been disturbances in Java and in Indo-China, and the leaders were dealt with in the only way possible under the circumstances. Let such movements get out of hand, as they seem to

be doing in India, and the worst we could do would be benevolence compared with the performance of the revolutionaries. It is not fair to the orderly, law-abiding majority to be lenient with them.

The people of Netherlands India and of French Indo-China approved of the drastic steps taken to stop movements very similar to Swaraj, and it would be the same in British India. The seditionists of Java were sent to New Guinea, and there allowed to form a settlement, and to run things in their own way. They very soon got tired of it, and a good many were allowed to return on promise of behaving sensibly in the future.

The Andamans, now that they are no longer a convict settlement, might very well be utilised as a Swaraj "reserve." There is no need to hang, imprison, or in any way ill-treat the Indian irreconcilables; they should be carefully and humanely segregated as a public nuisance. There would be no likelihood of hundreds, or even scores, rushing in to "martyrdom." The Hindu Swarajist is not of the stuff that heroes are made. The whole seditious side of the movement would vanish like a puff of smoke, and we might then get a chance of making a beginning with genuine Swaraj which does not exist to-day. *India* would not be disturbed; she would be at peace in less than twelve months.

Some such policy as is outlined above is the only solution of the present impossible situation in British India. Will anything of the kind be introduced? I doubt it, in view of our sentimentalists here at Home. The alternative is, as Mr. Gandhi expressed it, "red ruin, a revolution, the breaking-up of laws."

APPENDIX

PROCLAMATION BY THE QUEEN TO THE PRINCES, CHIEFS, AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, NOVEMBER 1, 1858.

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the Colonies and Dependencies thereof in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australasia, Queen, Defender of the Faith.

"Whereas, for divers weighty reasons, we have resolved, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament assembled, to take upon ourselves the government of the territories in India, heretofore administered in trust for us by the Honourable East India Company.

"Now, therefore, we do by these presents notify and declare that, by the advice and consent aforesaid, we have taken upon ourselves the said government; and we hereby call upon all our subjects within the said territories to be faithful, and to bear true allegiance to us, our heirs and successors, and to submit themselves to the authority of those whom we may hereafter, from time to time, see fit to appoint to administer the government of our said territories, in our name and on our behalf.

"And we, reposing especial trust and confidence in the loyalty, ability and judgment of our right trusty and well-beloved cousin Charles John, Viscount Canning, do hereby constitute and appoint him, the said Viscount Canning, to be our first Viceroy and Governor-General in and over our said territories, and to administer the government thereof in our name, and generally to act in our name and on our behalf,

subject to such orders and regulations as he shall, from time to time, receive through one of our Principal Secretaries of State.

"And we do hereby confirm in their several offices, civil and military, all persons now employed in the service of the Honourable East India Company, subject to our future pleasure, and to such laws and regulations as may hereafter be enacted.

"We hereby announce to the native princes of India, that all treaties and engagements made with them by or under the authority of the East India Company are by us accepted, and will be scrupulously maintained, and we look for the like observance on their part.

"We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions; and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions or our rights to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others.

"We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of native princes as our own; and we desire that they, as well as our own subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and that social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fill.

"Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial

protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge.

"We know, and respect, the feelings of attachment with which the natives of India regard the lands inherited by them from their ancestors, and we desire to protect them in all rights connected therewith, subject to the equitable demands of the State; and we will that, generally, in framing and administering the law, due regard be paid to the ancient rights, usages and customs of India.

"We deeply lament the evils and misery which have been brought upon India by the acts of ambitious men, who have deceived their countrymen by false reports, and led them into open rebellion. Our power has been shown by the suppression of that rebellion in the field; we desire to show our mercy by pardoning the offences of those who have been misled, but who desire to return to the path of duty.

"Already, in one province, with a desire to stop the further effusion of blood, and to hasten the pacification of our Indian dominions, our Viceroy and Governor-General has held out the expectation of pardon, on certain terms, to the great majority of those who, in the late unhappy disturbances, have been guilty of offences against our Government, and has declared the punishment which will be inflicted on those whose crimes place them beyond the reach of forgiveness. We approve and confirm the said act of our

Viceroy and Governor-General, and do further announce and proclaim as follows:

"Our clemency will be extended to all offenders, save and except those who have been, or shall be, convicted of having directly taken part in the murder of British subjects. With regard to such the demands of justice forbid the exercise of mercy.

"To those who have willingly given asylum to murderers, knowing them to be such, or who may have acted as leaders or instigators of revolt, their lives alone can be guaranteed; but, in apportioning the penalty due to such persons, full consideration will be given to the circumstances under which they have been induced to throw off their allegiance; and large indulgence will be shown to those whose crimes may appear to have originated in too credulous acceptance of the false reports circulated by designing men.

"To all others in arms against the Government we hereby promise unconditional pardon, amnesty and oblivion of all offences against ourselves, our crown and dignity, on their return to their homes and peaceful pursuits.

"It is our royal pleasure that these terms of grace and amnesty should be extended to all those who comply with these conditions before the first day of January next.

"When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquillity shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

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